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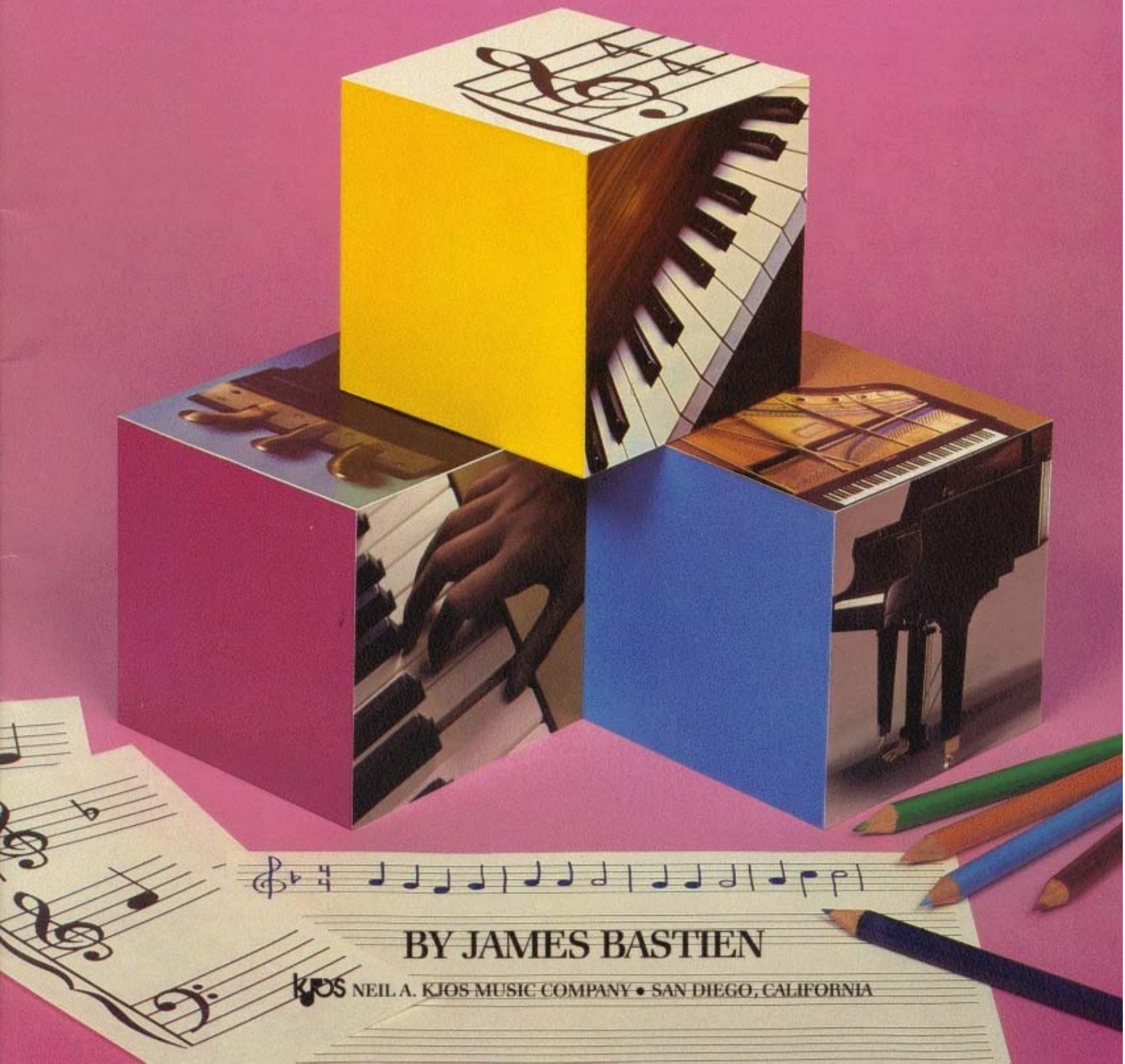
BASTIEN PIANO BASICS

THEORY

PRIMER LEVEL



BY JAMES BASTIEN

KJOS NEIL A. KJOS MUSIC COMPANY • SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Dear teachers and parents:

BASTIEN PIANO BASICS is an exciting and comprehensive series for piano study designed to get the young student off to the right start. The learning sequence is carefully graded to assure steady progress in all areas.

Theory, Primer is coordinated page-by-page with **Piano, Primer** and **Performance, Primer.** The three books should be used simultaneously for thorough reinforcement of each concept. The suggested sequence among the books is listed in the *Contents*.

Theory contains written work and some short pieces to reinforce each concept introduced. Students will have a better understanding of the music they are playing—and will learn it more easily—when theory is integrated as a regular part of the learning process.

We offer you our best wishes for achievement and success.

Neil A. Kjos Music Company
James Bastien
Jane Smisor Bastien

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THEORY

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*To reinforce the feeling of achievement, the teacher or student may put a √ when the page has been completed.

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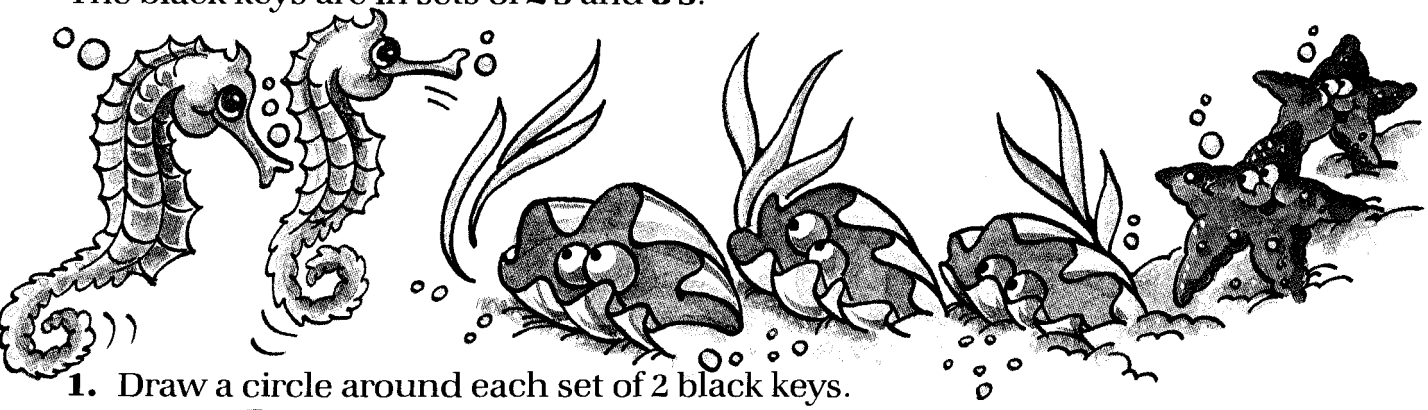
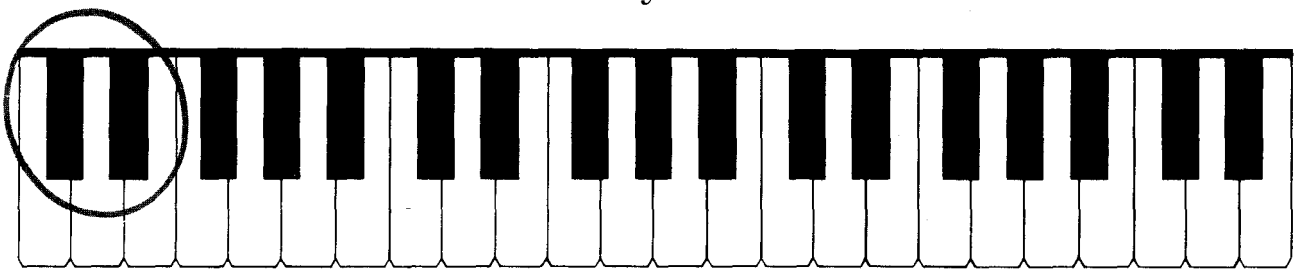
The Piano Keyboard

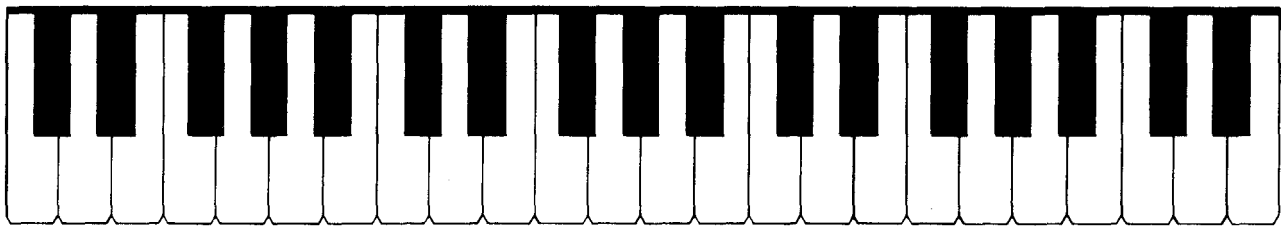
The keyboard has **white** and **black** keys.
The black keys are in sets of **2's** and **3's**.



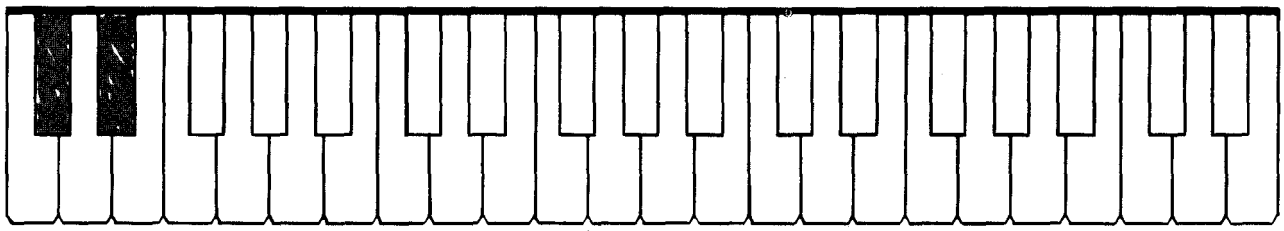
1. Draw a circle around each set of 2 black keys.



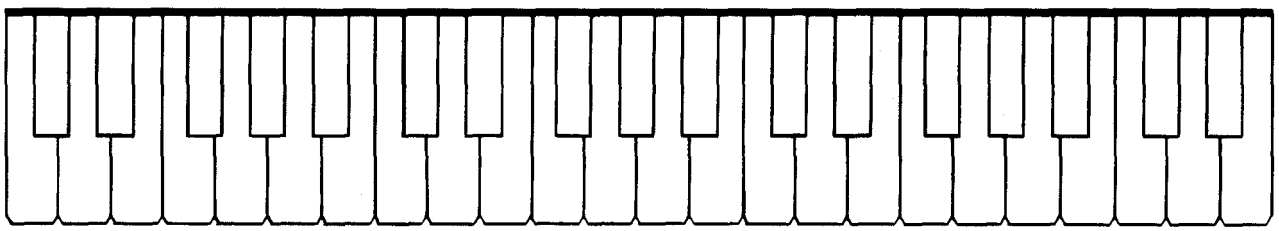
2. Draw a circle around each set of 3 black keys.



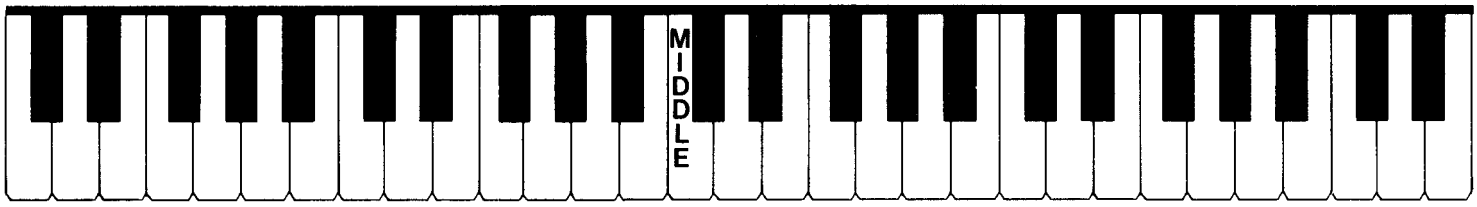
3. Fill in all the sets of 2 black keys.



4. Fill in all the sets of 3 black keys.



Low and High



5. On the keyboard, **high** keys are usually played with the Right Hand.
   a. Play the sets of 2 black keys up the keyboard with your R.H. Start at the middle of the keyboard.
   b. Play the sets of 3 black keys up the keyboard with your R.H. Start at the middle of the keyboard.

6. On the keyboard, **low** keys are usually played with the Left Hand.
   a. Play the sets of 2 black keys down the keyboard with your L.H. Start at the middle of the keyboard.
   b. Play the sets of 3 black keys down the keyboard with your L.H. Start at the middle of the keyboard.

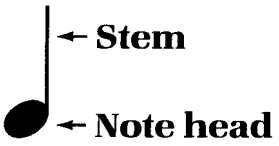
7. Make up some pieces using sets of black keys.
   a. Make up a piece using the sets of 2 black keys.
   b. Make up a piece using the sets of 3 black keys.

Your pieces could be about growling lions, a cat high in a tree, or whatever you like.

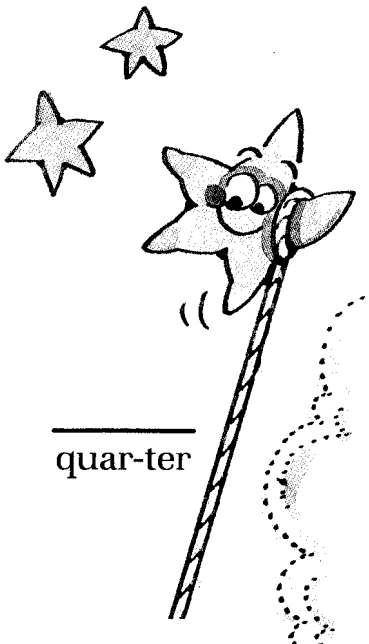
Rhythm in Music

Different kinds of notes are used to make **rhythm** in music. Some notes are short, while others are held for a longer time.

Quarter note



Half note

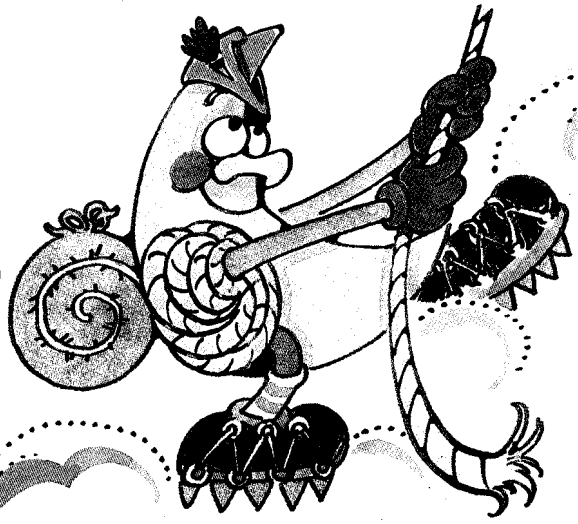


8. Draw three quarter notes. Clap and count this rhythm.

Count: quar-ter _____ quar-ter _____ quar-ter _____ quar-ter

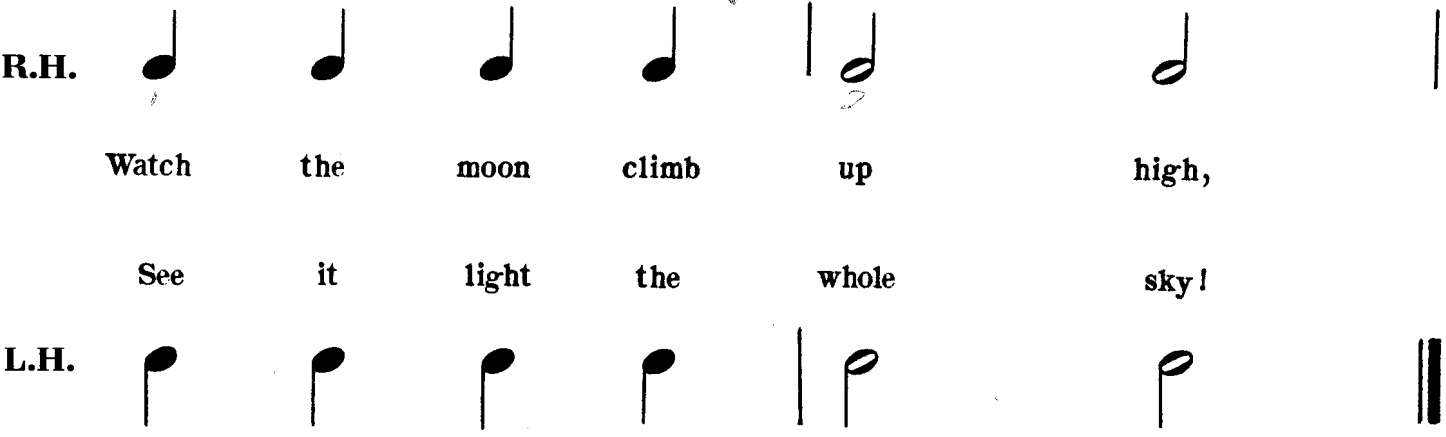
9. Draw three half notes. Clap and count this rhythm.

Count: half note _____ half note _____ half note _____ half note



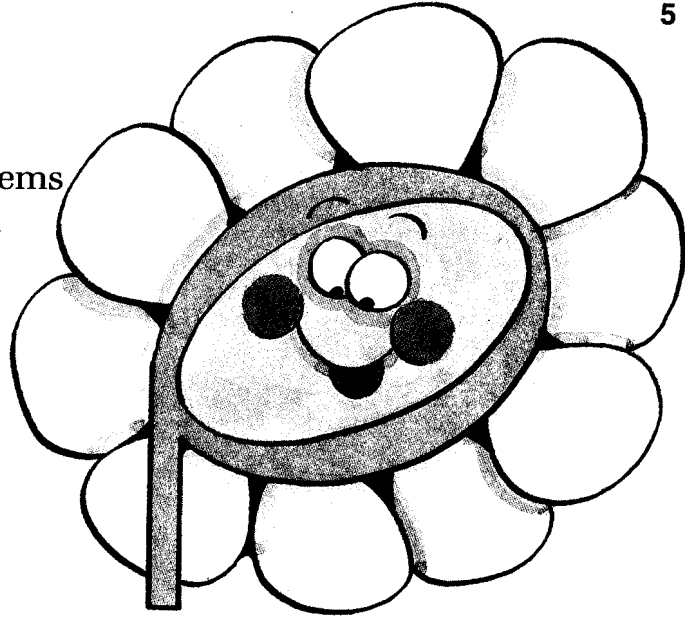
10. Use any three black keys and make up a melody for this song. Write finger numbers under notes (R.H.) or over notes (L.H.) for your melody.

The Moon



Stems on Notes

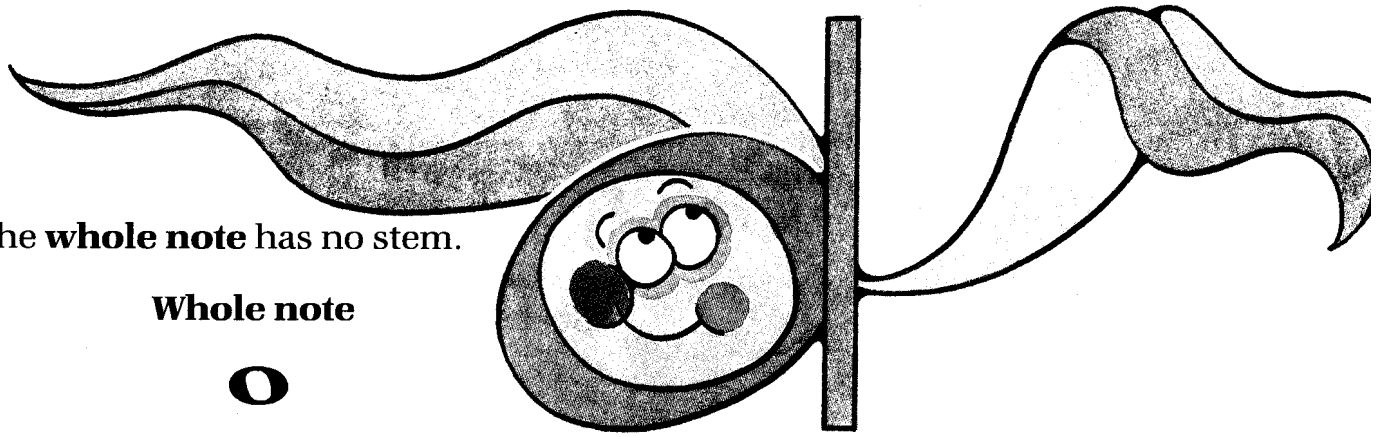
A **stem** may go up or down on a note. Up stems go on the **right** side, and down stems go on the **left** side.



Up stem **Down stem**

11. Draw up stems on these notes.

12. Draw down stems on these notes.



The **whole note** has no stem.

Whole note

13. Draw three whole notes. Clap and count this rhythm.

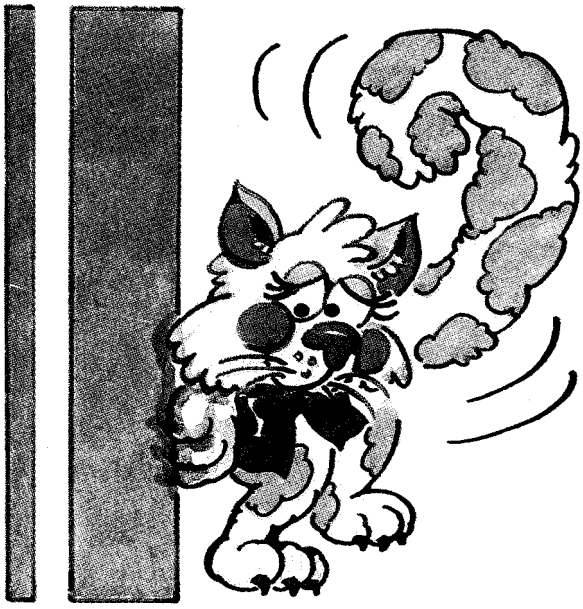
Count: whole note hold it | whole note hold it | whole note hold it | whole note hold it

14. Write the names of these notes.

quarter

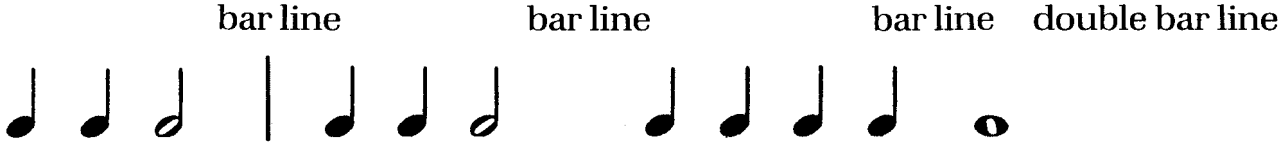
Bar Lines

Bar lines divide music into **measures**. The end of a piece has a **double bar line**.

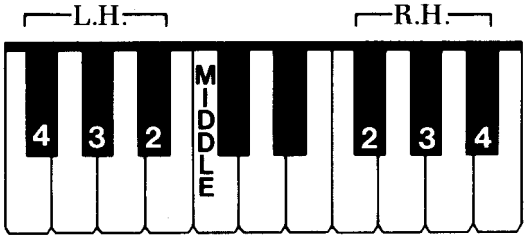


The **repeat sign** is shown by two dots before a double bar line. Repeat the music from the beginning.

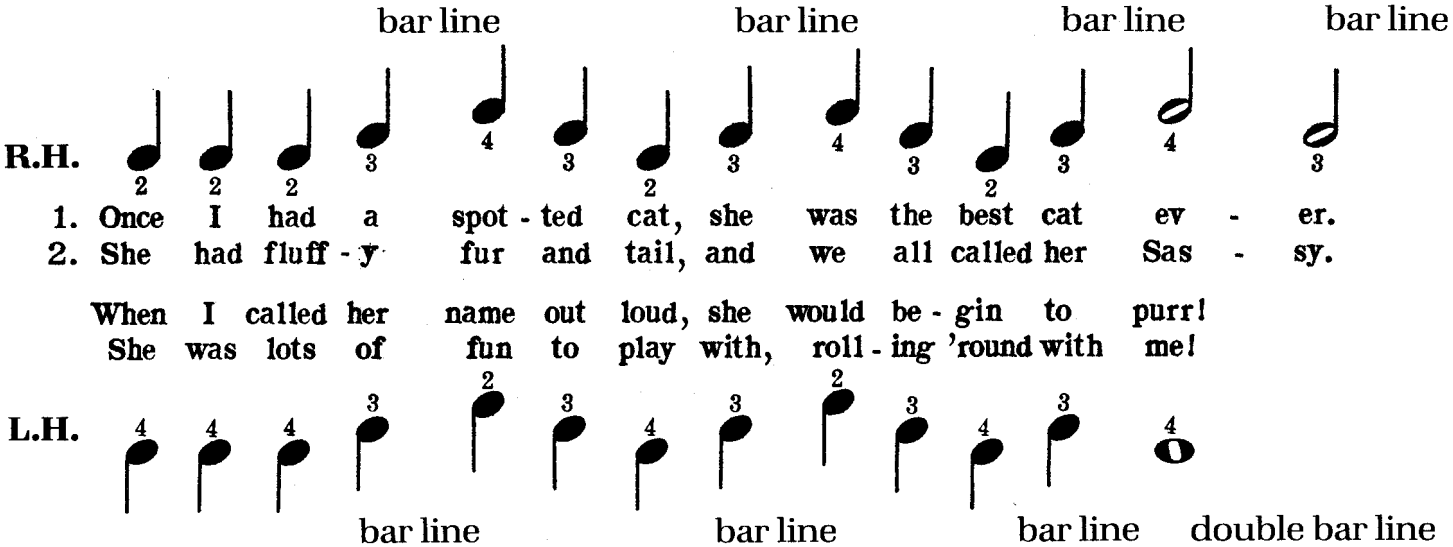
15. Draw bar lines to separate these notes into measures. Use a double bar line at the end. Clap and count this rhythm.



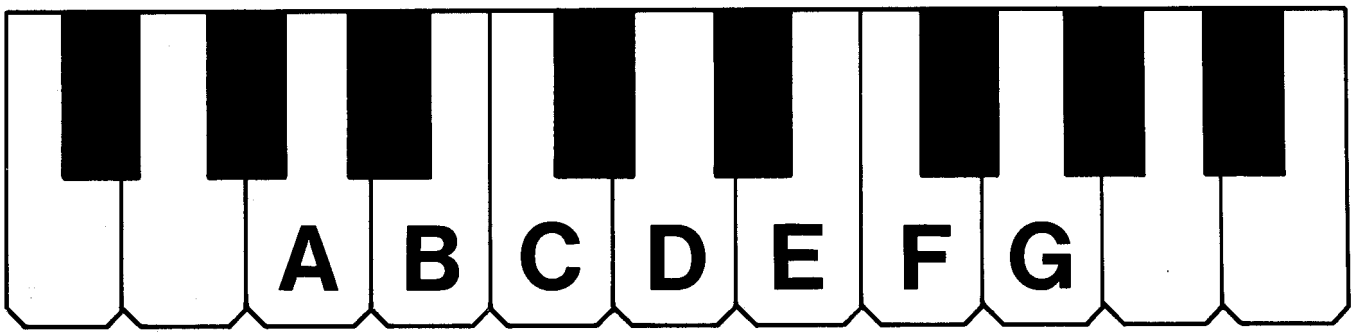
16. Draw bar lines in this piece. Draw a double bar line at the end and put two dots before it. Play this piece.



My Spotted Cat

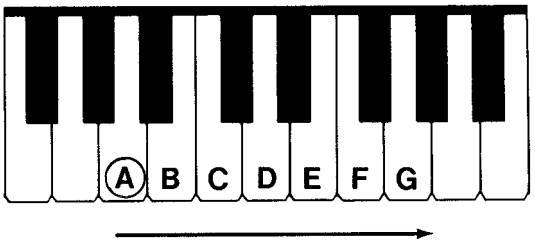


The Music Alphabet



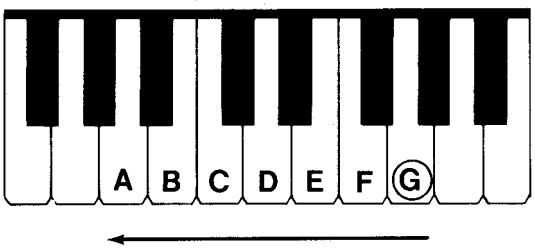
17. How many letters are there in the music alphabet? _____

18. When you play and say the music alphabet forward, you go **up** the keyboard to the **right**.
Write the music alphabet forward. Play it.



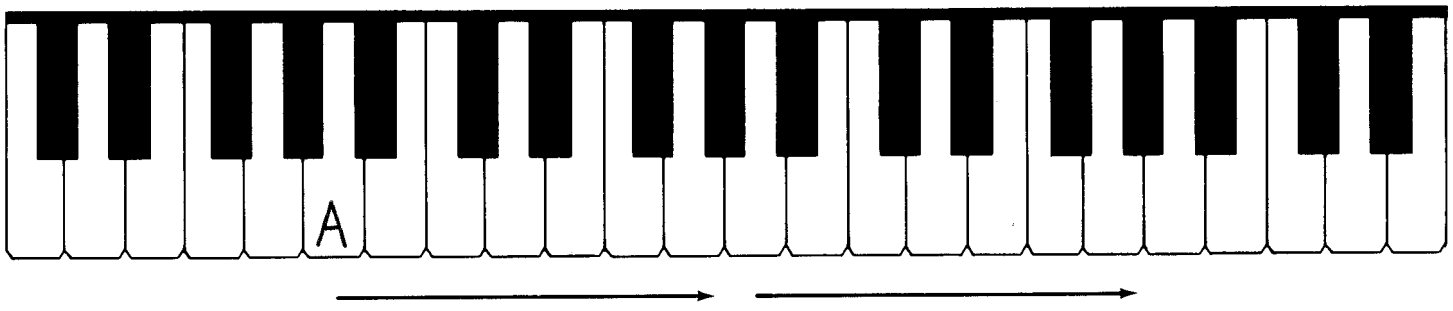
A _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

19. When you play and say the music alphabet backward, you go **down** the keyboard to the **left**.
Write the music alphabet backward. Play it.

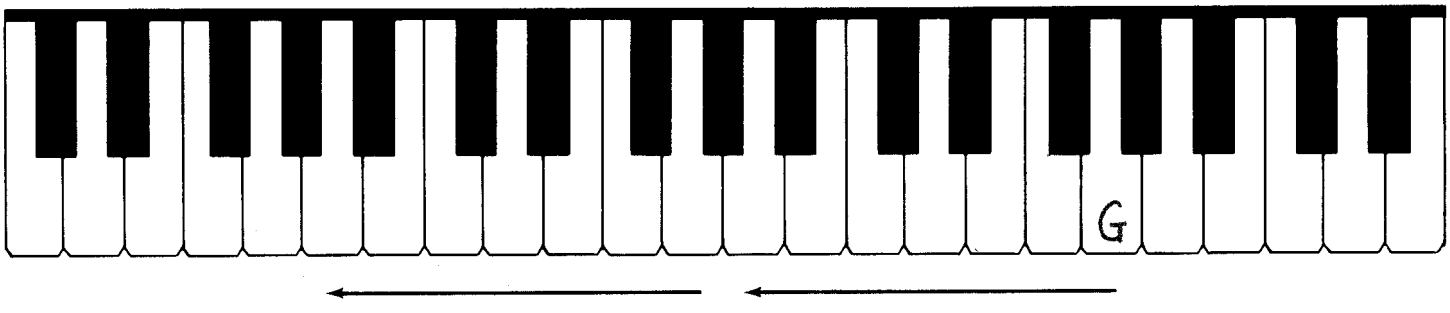


_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ G

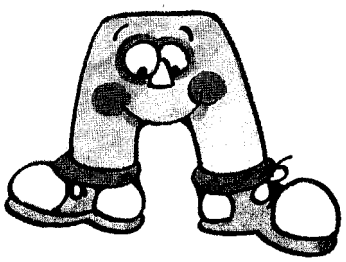
20. Write the music alphabet forward two times on this keyboard. Play it.



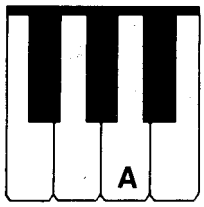
21. Write the music alphabet backward two times on this keyboard. Play it.



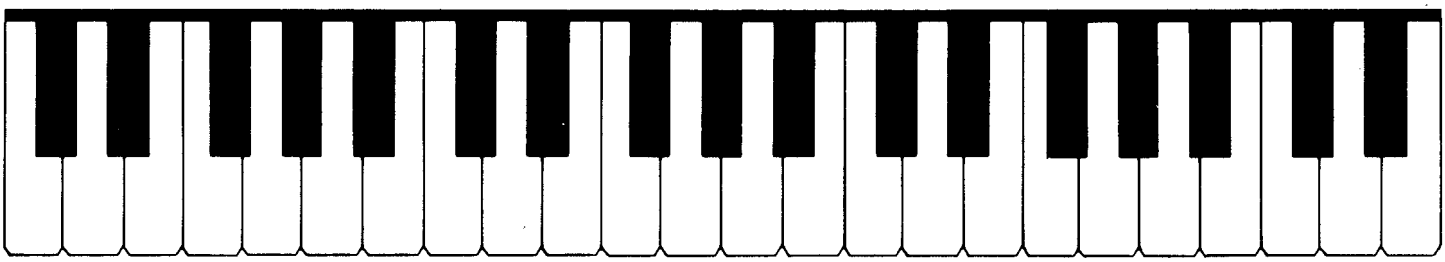
White Key Names

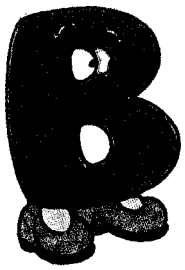


A is between the 2nd and 3rd keys in the 3 black key set.

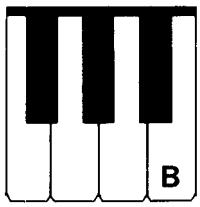


22. Write an *A* on all the A's on this keyboard. Play all the A's on your piano.

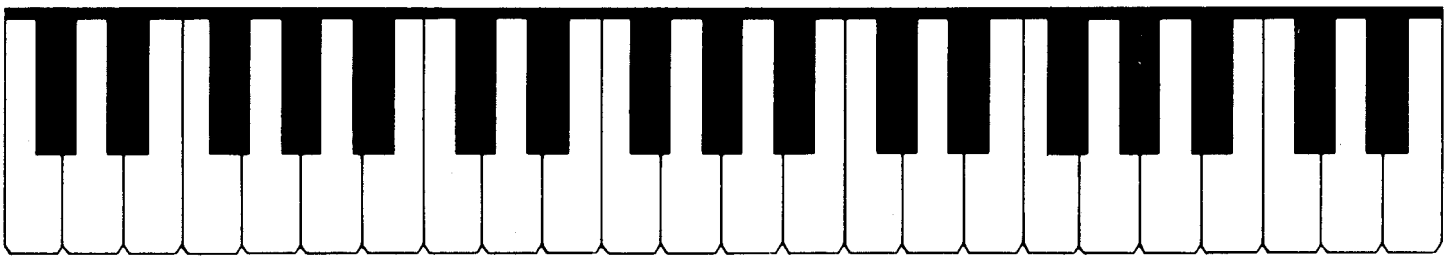


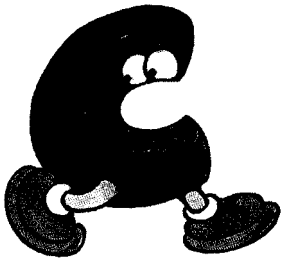


B is to the right of the 3 black key set.

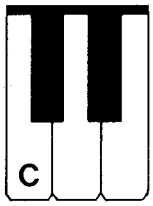


23. Write a *B* on all the B's on this keyboard. Play all the B's on your piano.

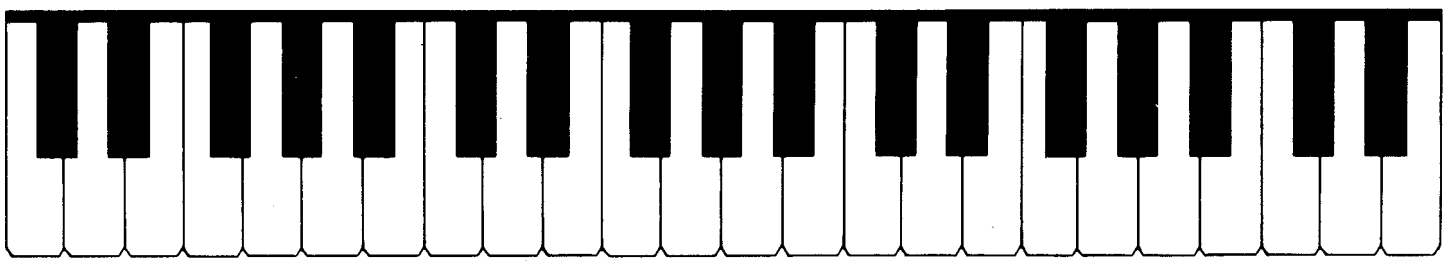


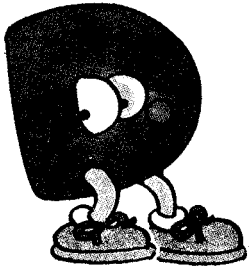


C is to the left of the 2 black key set.



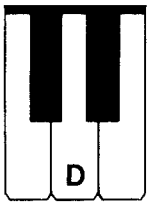
24. Write a *C* on all the C's on this keyboard. Play all the C's on your piano.

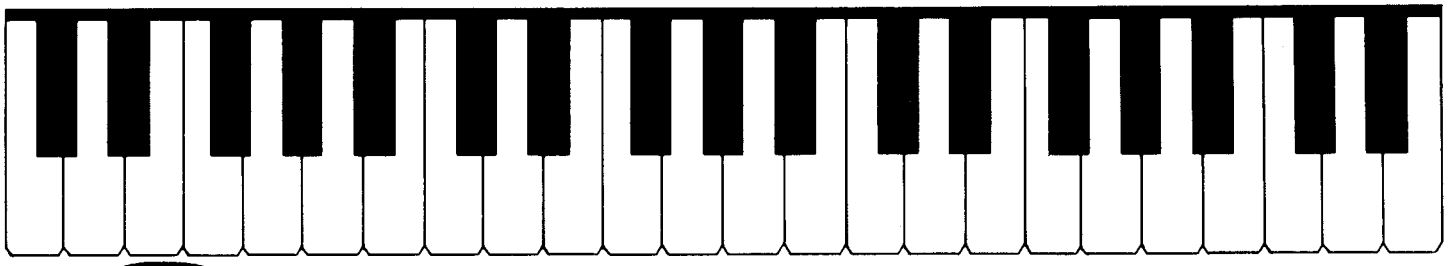




D is in the middle of the 2 black key set.

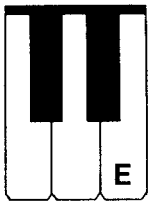
25. Write a *D* on all the D's on this keyboard.
Play all the D's on your piano.

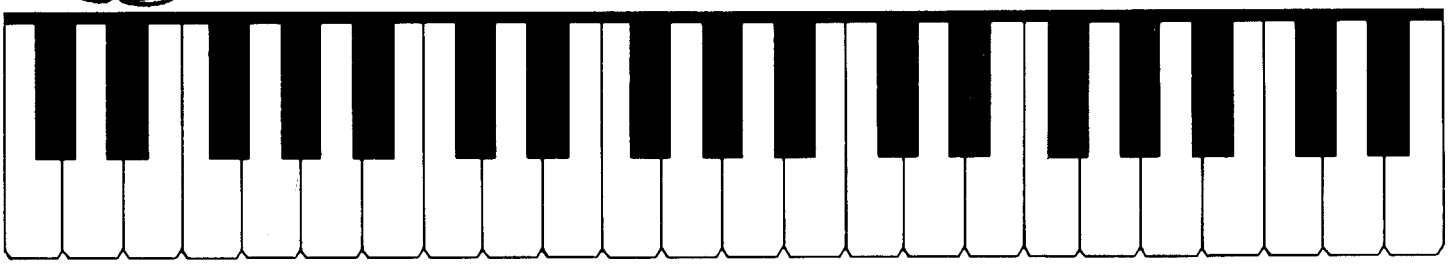


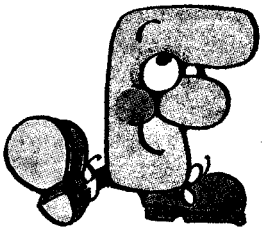


E is to the right of the 2 black key set.

26. Write an *E* on all the E's on this keyboard.
Play all the E's on your piano.

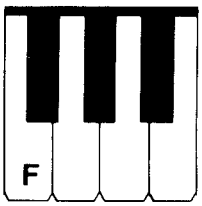


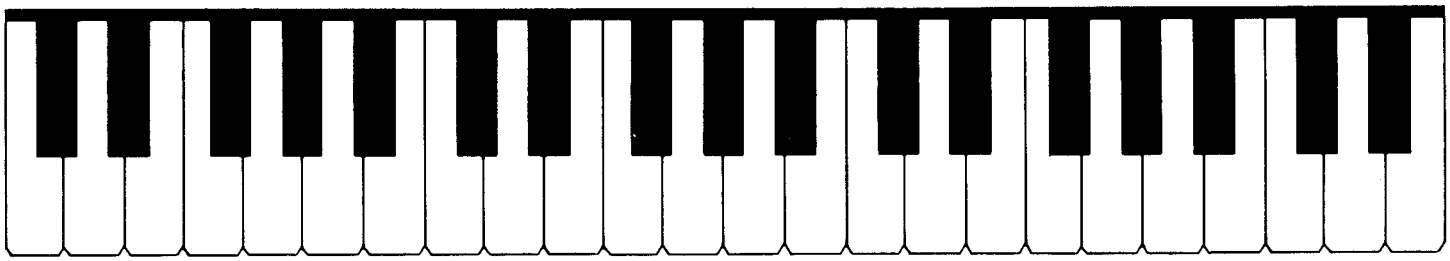


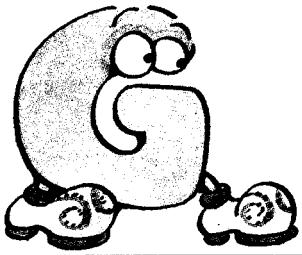


F is to the left of the 3 black key set.

27. Write an *F* on all the F's on this keyboard.
Play all the F's on your piano.

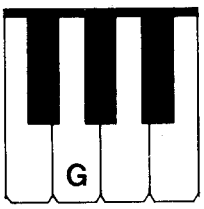


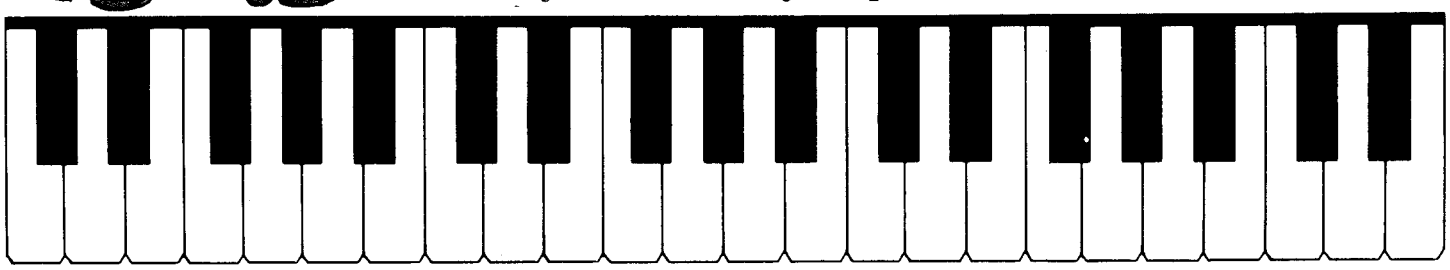




G is between the 1st and 2nd keys
in the 3 black key set.

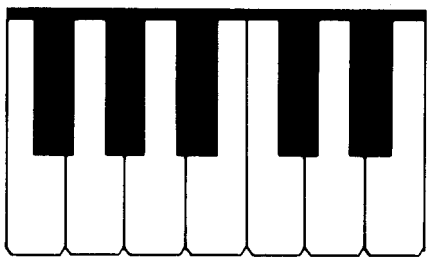
28. Write a *G* on all the G's on this keyboard.
Play all the G's on your piano.





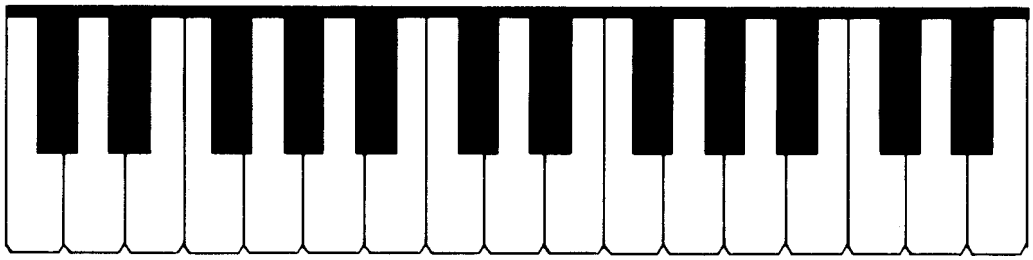
Space Flight Game

In this game, write the word that has all capital letters on the keyboard.

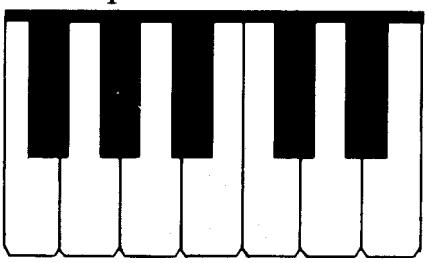


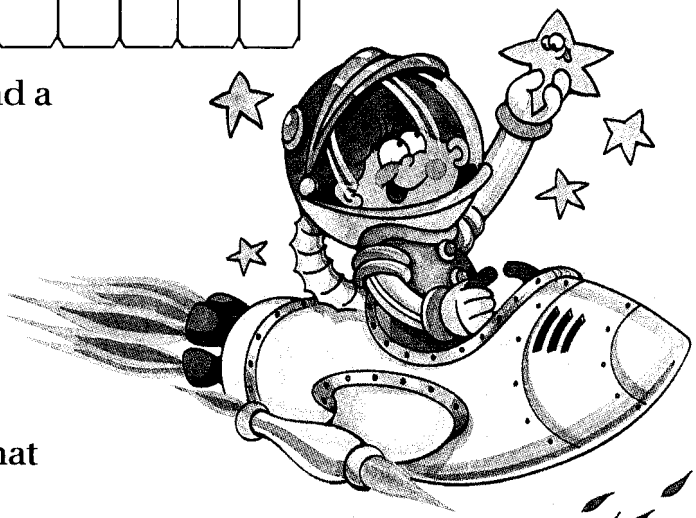
This is Star Ship Commander Fletcher. He and his crew travel far into outer space. Their ship's name is **ACE**.

Commander Fletcher's mission is to find the alien creatures who are on a distant planet and locked in a **CAGE**.

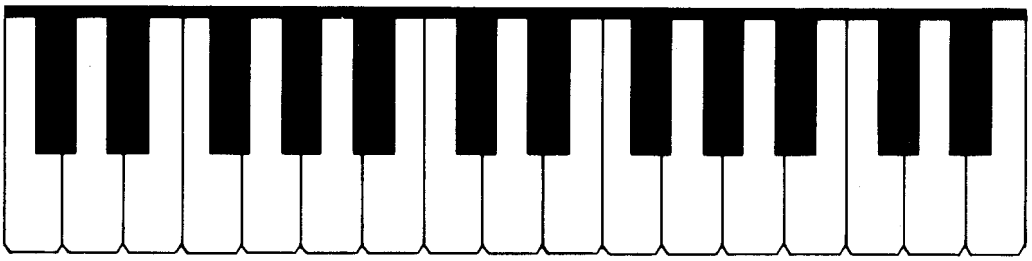


Each creature has weird arms and feet and a wild expression on its **FACE**.

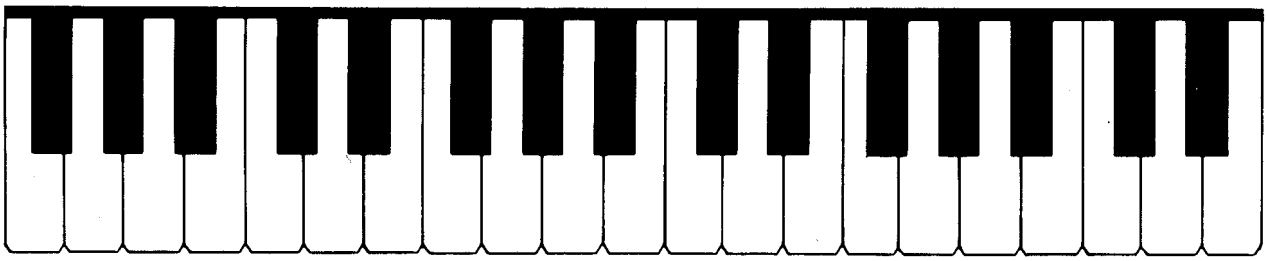




But Commander Fletcher understands that their yelling means they want to be **FED**.

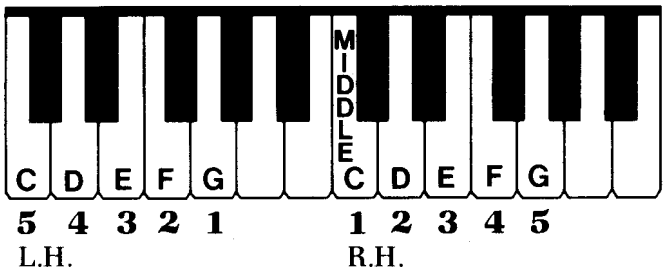


Once fed, the creatures are brought aboard the Star Ship Ace for the long trip back to Earth. For outstanding work, Commander Fletcher and his men are all given a special medal which they wear like a **BADGE**.



Mission Complete!

C Position

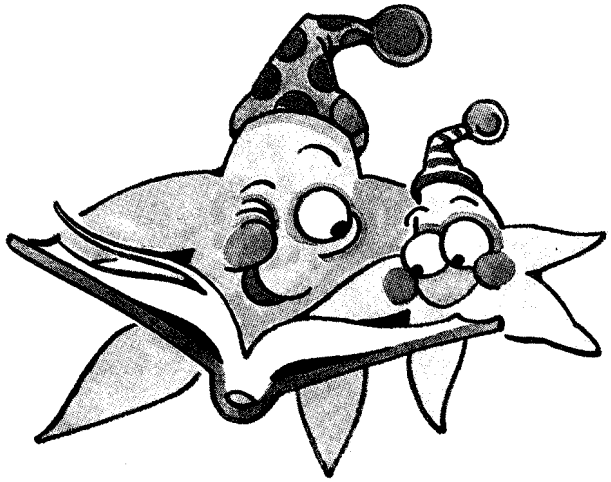


29. Write the alphabet letters in the C position. Play and name these letters.

L.H. ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ **R.H.** ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

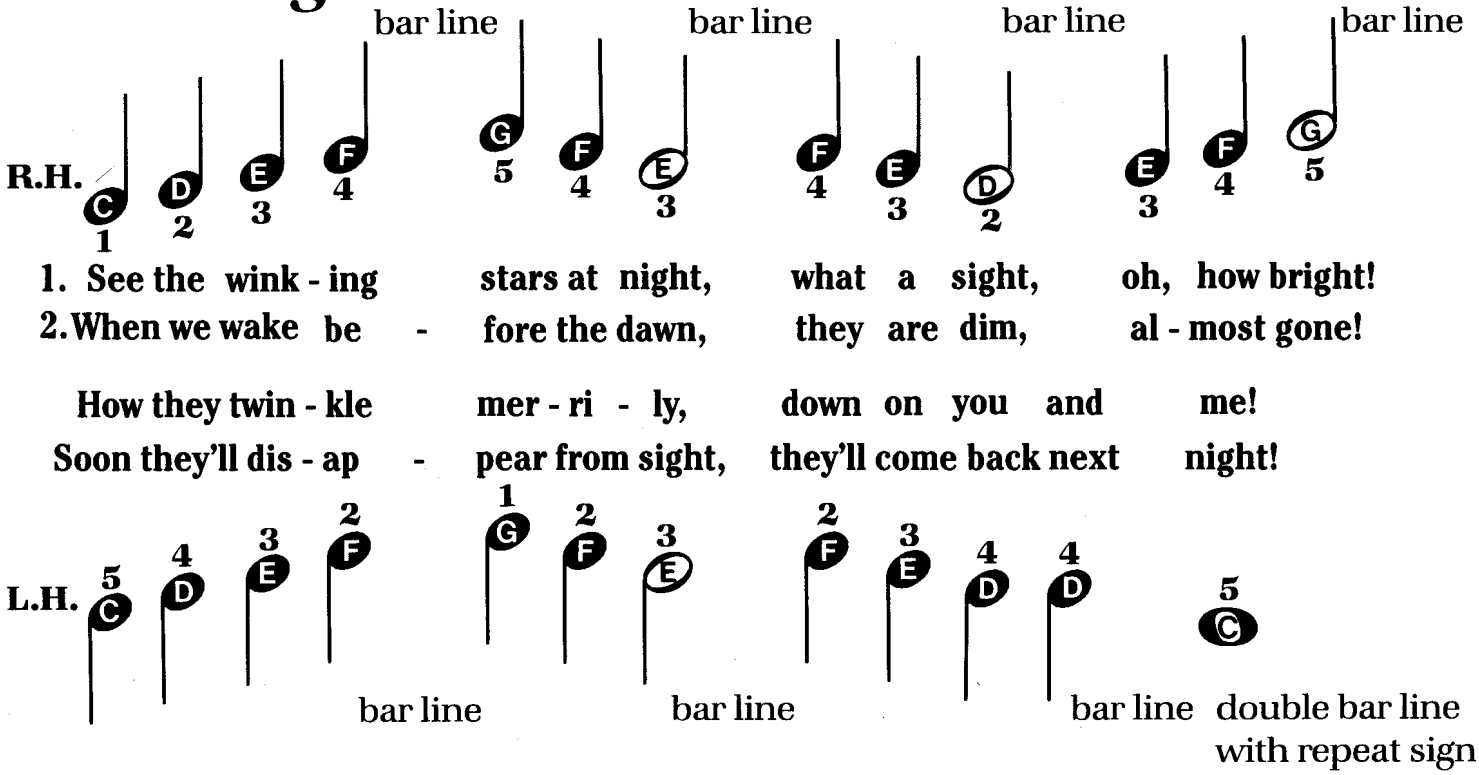
30. Write the letters backward, starting with G. Play and name these letters backward.

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ **L.H.** ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ **R.H.**



31. Draw bar lines in this piece. Draw a double bar line at the end with a repeat sign. Play this piece.

Stars at Night



Time Signatures

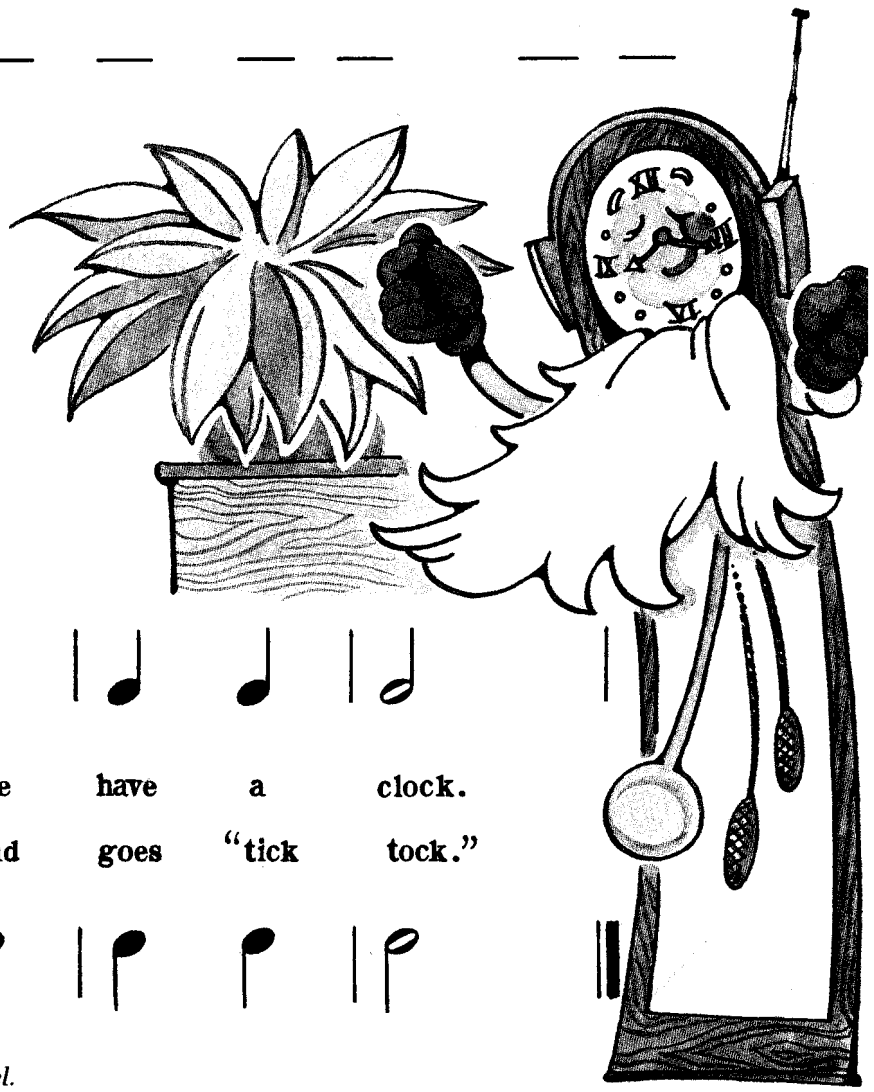
The **time signature** is the two numbers written at the beginning of a piece.
The **top** number tells how many beats are in each measure.
The **bottom** number tells what kind of a note gets one beat.

2 means two beats in each measure.
4 means the quarter note gets one beat.

32. Clap and count this rhythm aloud.

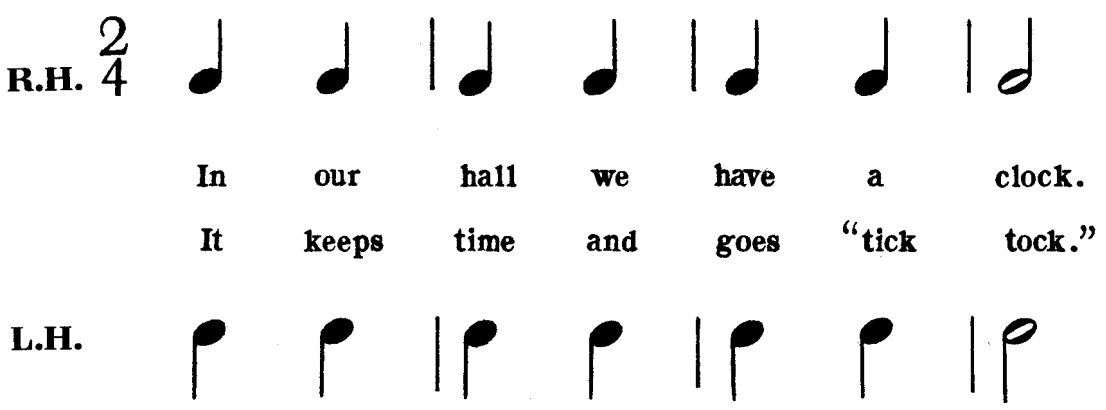
Count: 1 2 1 2 *(continue counting)*
or: quar-ter quar-ter half note *(continue counting)*

33. Write the counts under these notes. Clap and count this rhythm aloud.



34. Make up a melody for this song in the **C position**. Write finger numbers under notes (R.H.) or over notes (L.H.) for your melody.

Grandfather Clock



R.H.

In our hall we have a clock.
It keeps time and goes "tick tock."

L.H.

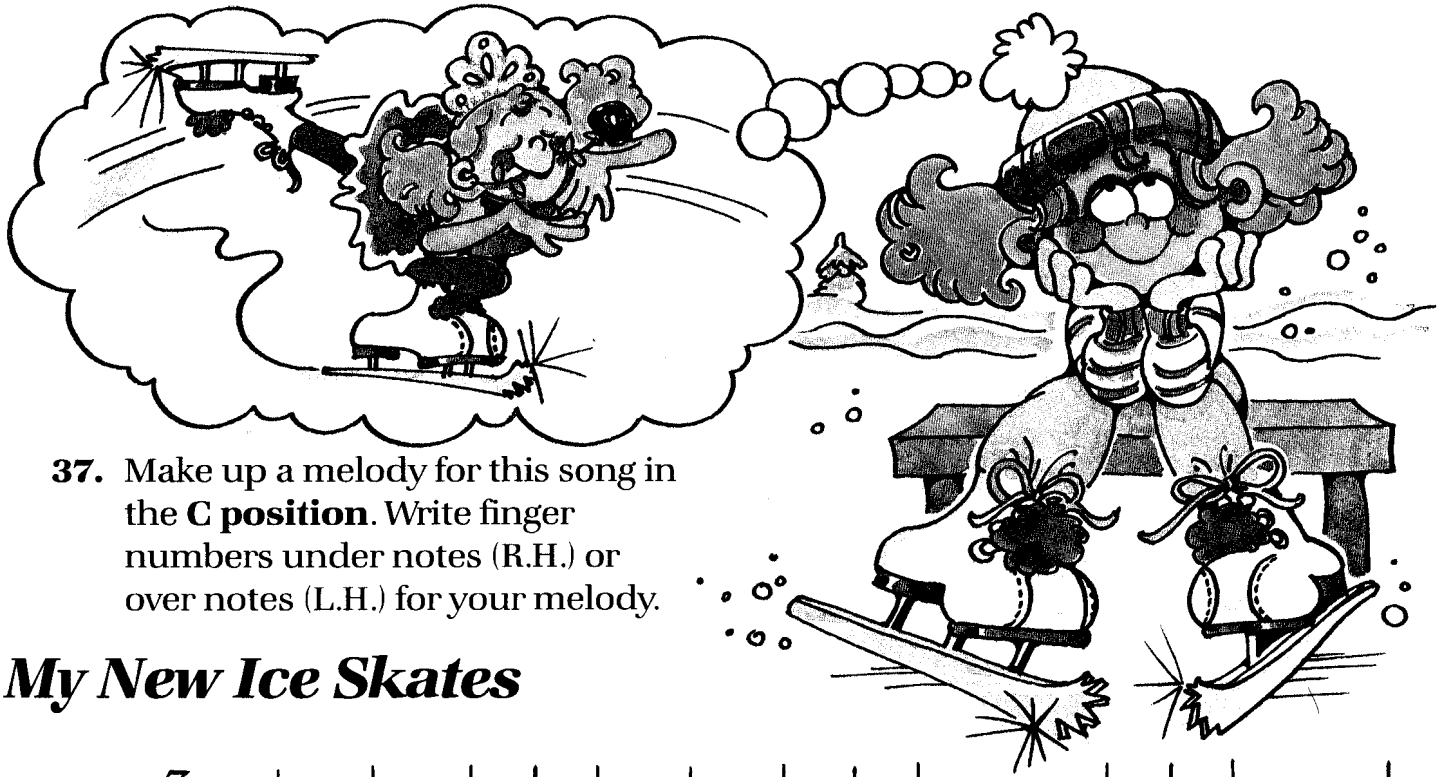
3 means three beats in each measure.
4 means the quarter note gets one beat.

The **dotted half note** 𝅗𝅥. gets three beats.

35. Clap and count this rhythm aloud.

Count: 1 2 3 1 2 3 *(continue counting)*
or: quar-ter quar-ter quar-ter half note dot *(continue counting)*

36. Write the counts under these notes. Clap and count this rhythm aloud.



37. Make up a melody for this song in the **C position**. Write finger numbers under notes (R.H.) or over notes (L.H.) for your melody.

My New Ice Skates

R.H.

In my new skates with their shin - y blades,

I dream I'll star in the Ice Ca - pades.

L.H.

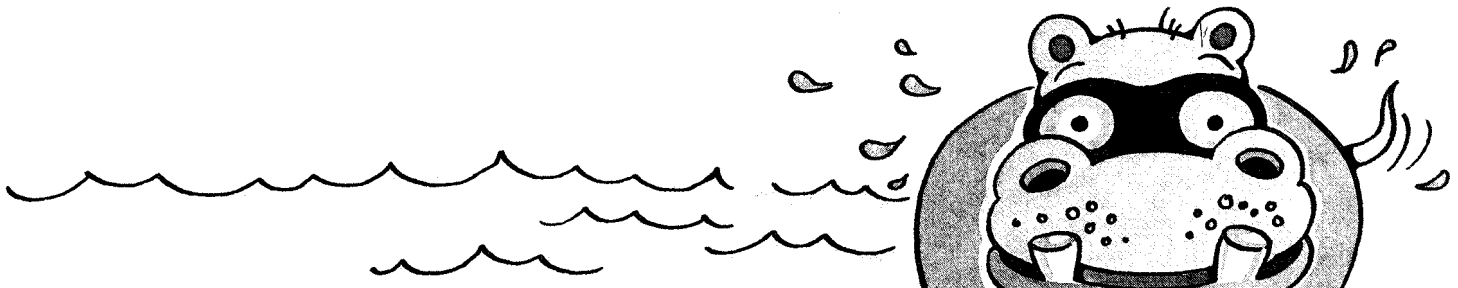
4 means four beats in each measure.
4 means the quarter note gets one beat.

The **whole note** 𝅝 gets four beats.

38. Clap and count this rhythm aloud.

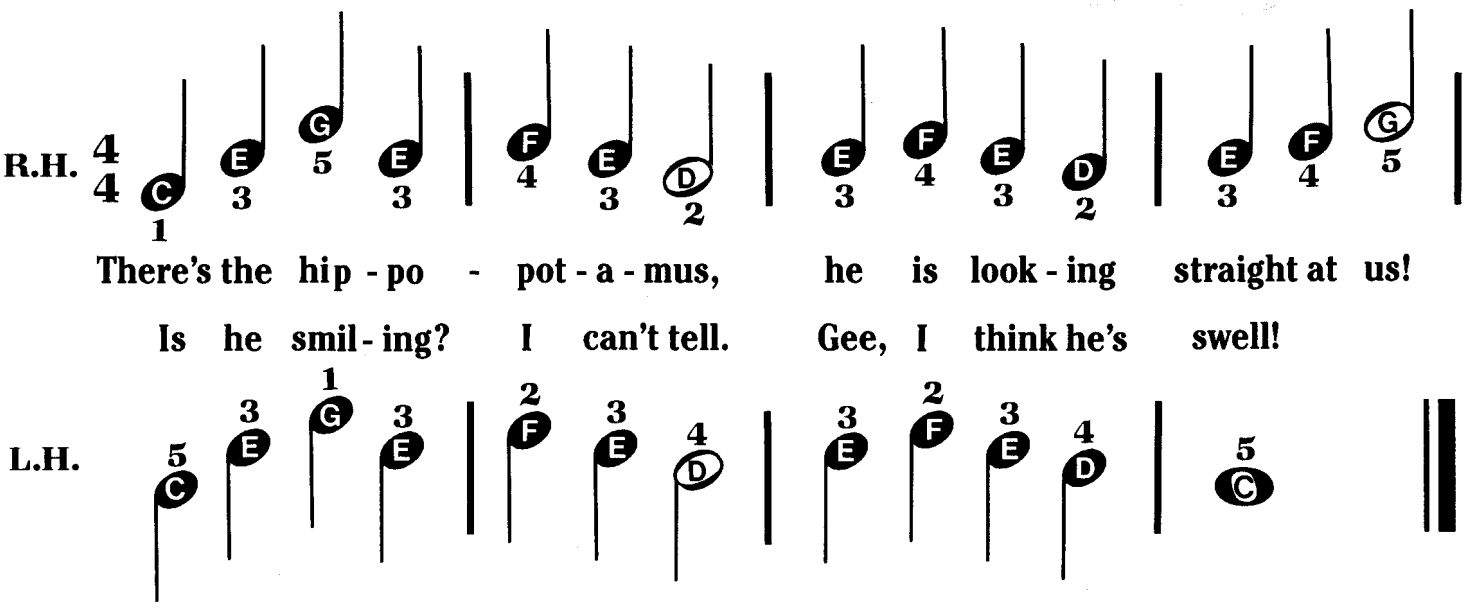
Count: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 *(continue counting)*
or: half note half note whole note hold it *(continue counting)*

39. Write the counts under these notes. Clap and count this rhythm aloud.



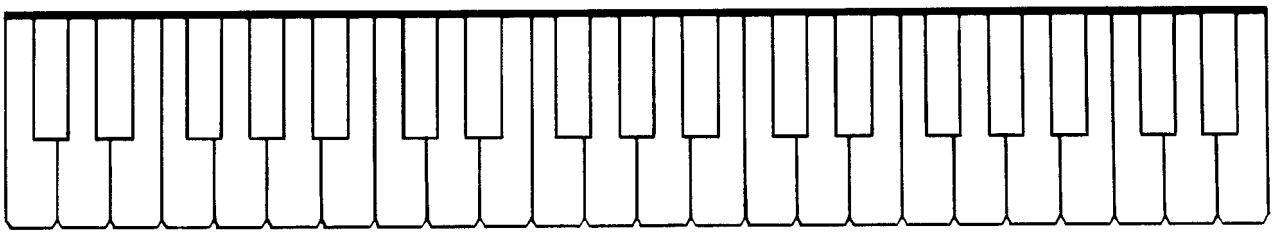
40. Play this piece in the **C position**. Count aloud.

The Mysterious Hippopotamus

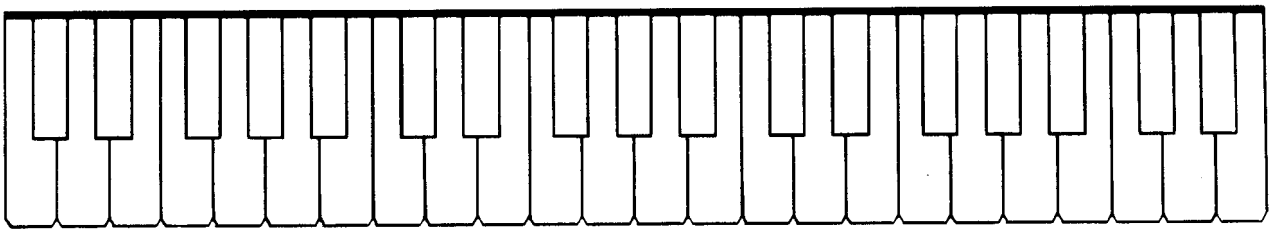


Review Quiz

41. Fill in the sets of 2 black keys.



42. Fill in the sets of 3 black keys.



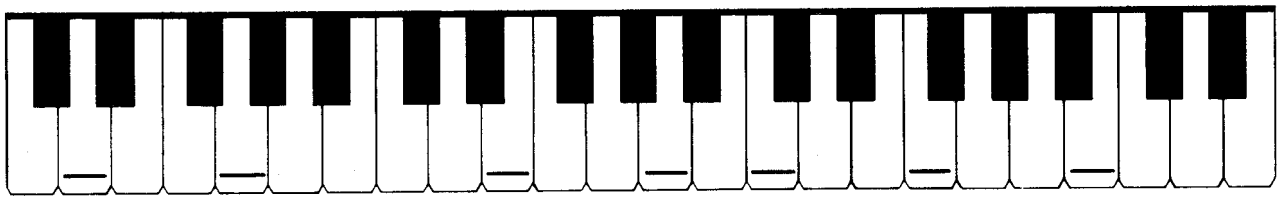
43. Draw up stems on these notes.

Draw down stems on these notes.

44. Write the music alphabet. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

45. Write the alphabet letters in the C position. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

46. Write the names of these white keys.



47. Write the names of these notes.

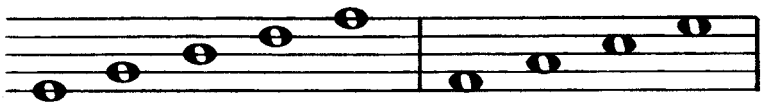
_____ _____ _____ _____

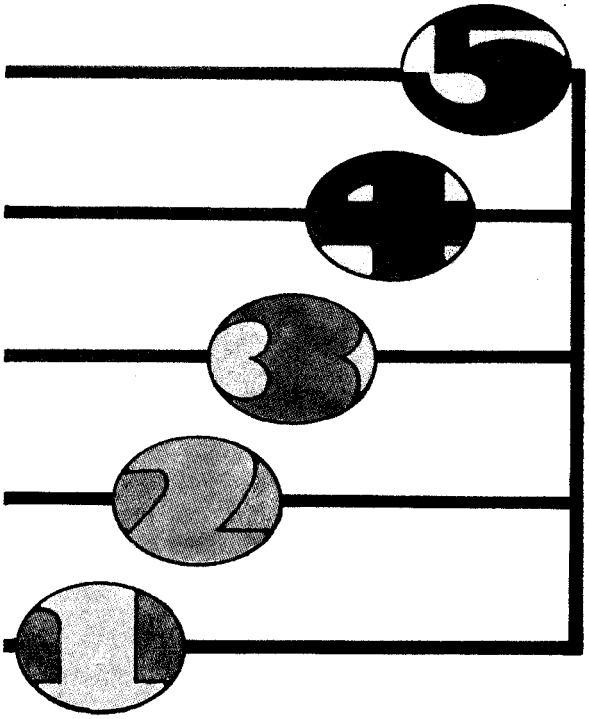
48. Divide these rhythms into measures with bar lines. Add a double bar line with a repeat sign at the end of each line. Write the counts below the notes.

The Staff

The **staff** has lines and spaces. Notes are written on **lines** or in **spaces**.

Line notes **Space notes**





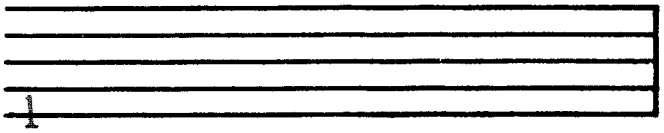
49. How many lines does the staff have?

_____

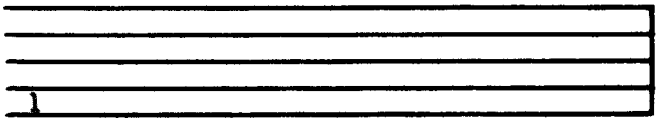
How many spaces does the staff have?

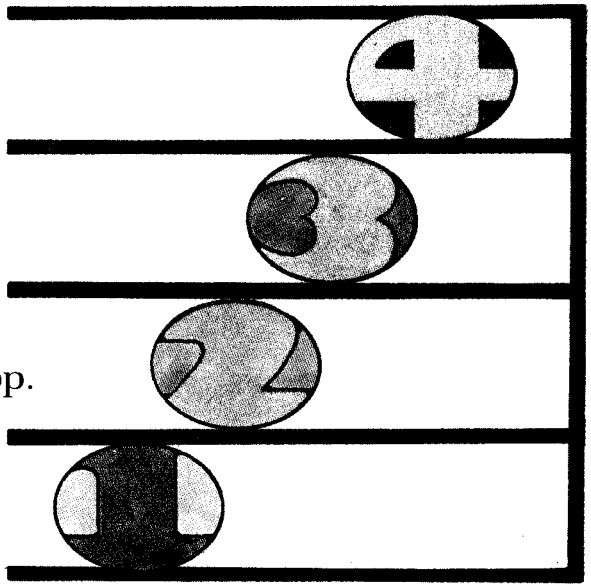
_____

50. Number the lines from the bottom to the top.



Number the spaces from the bottom to the top.

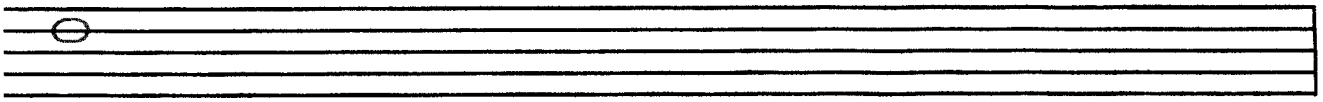




51. Write **L** for the line notes and **S** for the space notes.

L _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

52. Draw line and space notes on the staff above the letters. Use whole notes.

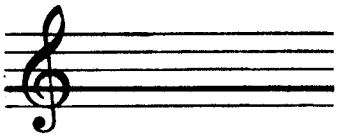


L S L S S L L S L

Clef Signs

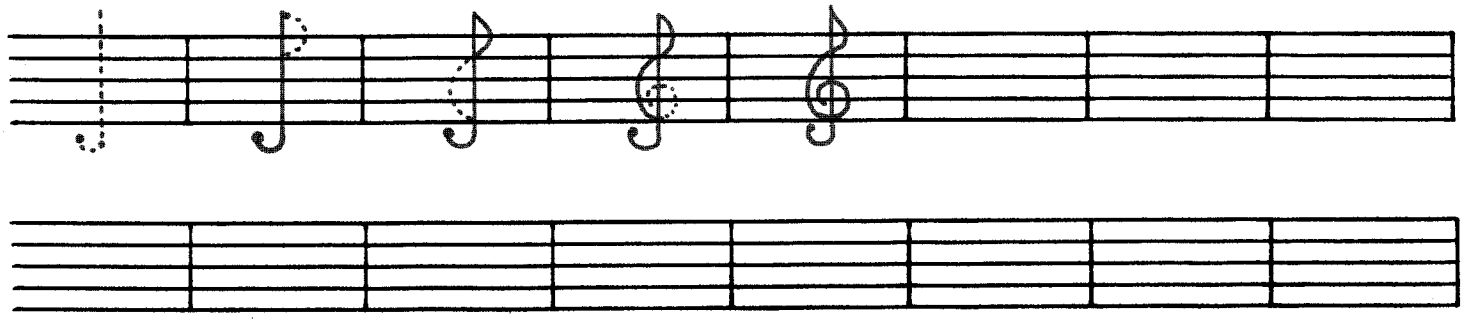
A **clef sign** is used at the beginning of each staff.

Treble clef
or G clef



2nd line

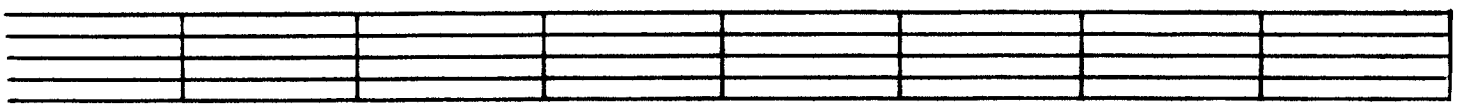
53. Trace what is shown,
then draw your own treble clefs.



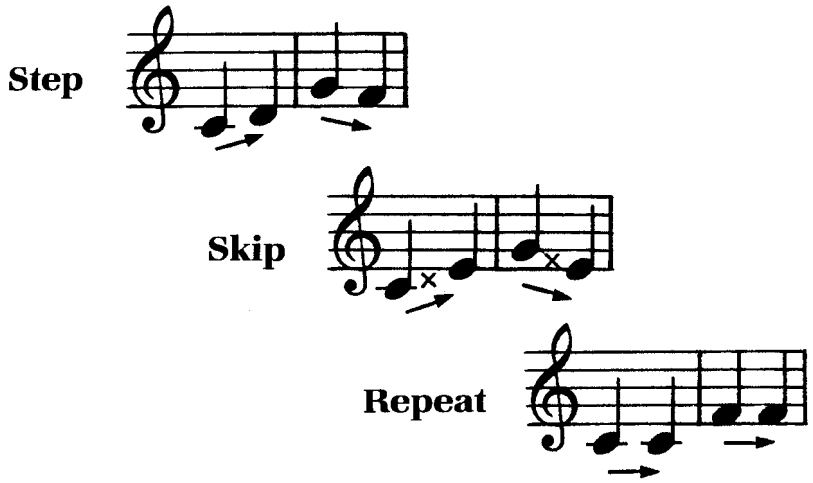
Bass clef
or F clef

4th line

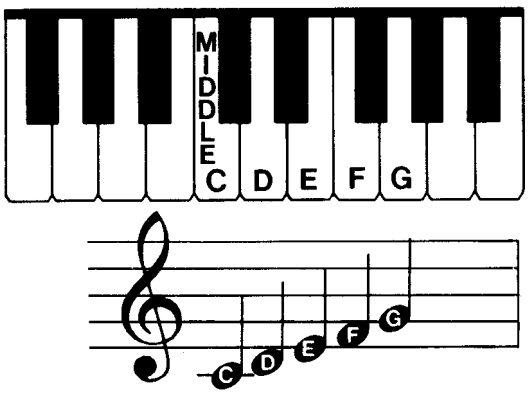
54. Trace what is shown, then draw your own bass clefs.



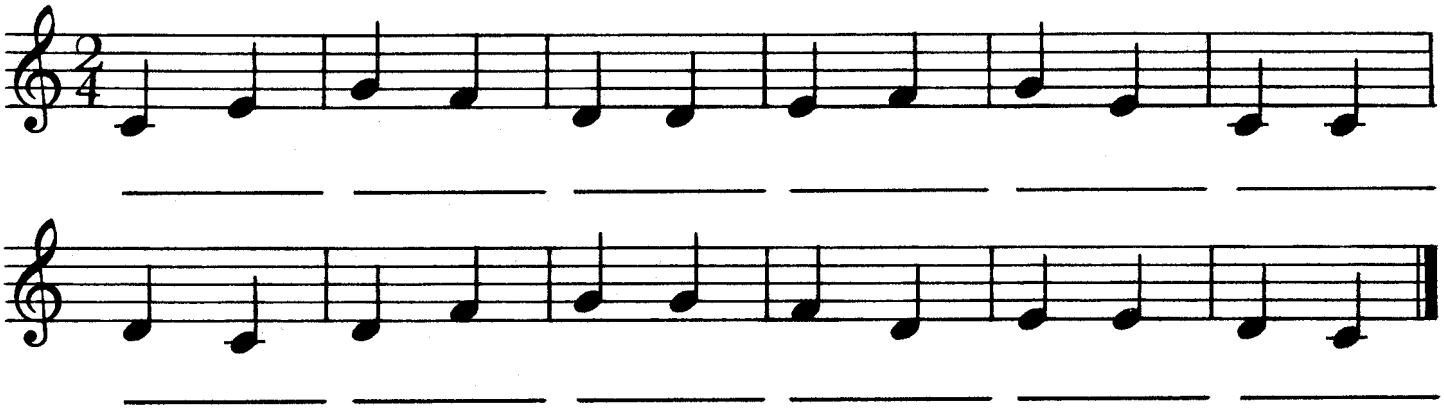
How Notes Move on the Staff



C Position (R.H.)

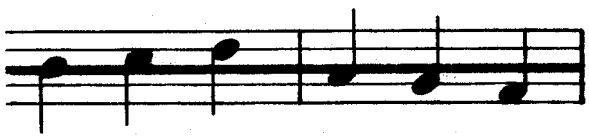


55. Write how these notes move on the staff. Write *step, skip,* or *repeat*. Play and name these notes.

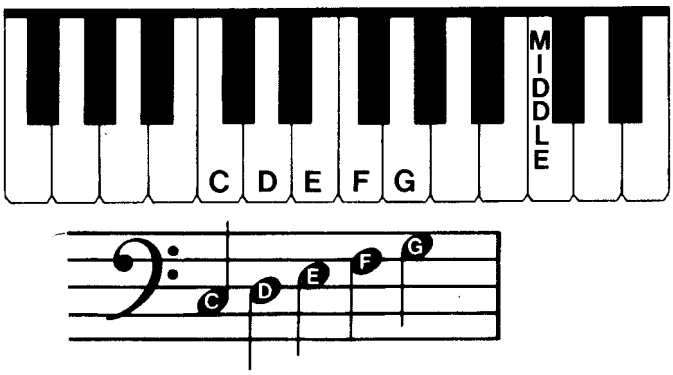


Notes **on or above** the middle line have **down stems**.

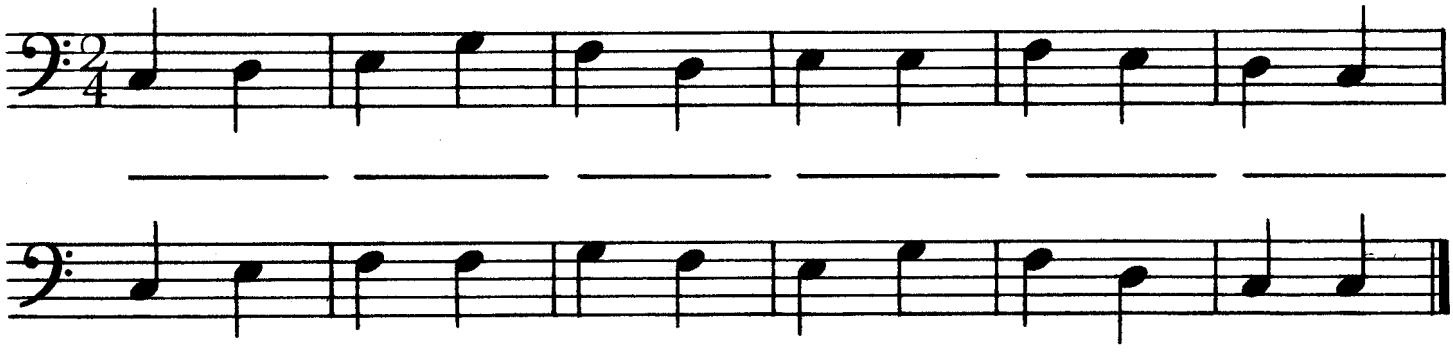
Notes **below** the middle line have **up stems**.



C Position (L.H.)

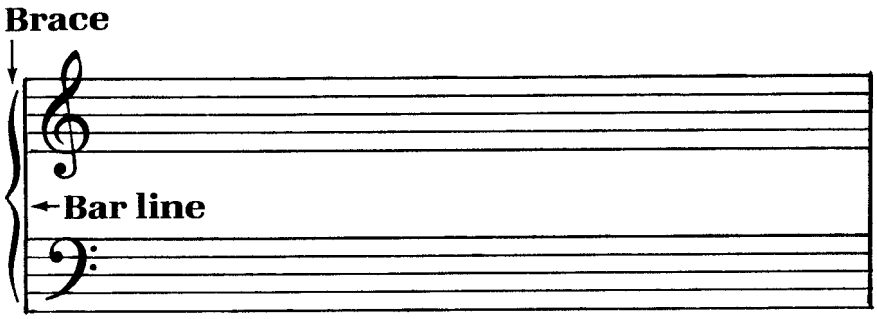


56. Write how these notes move on the staff. Write *step, skip,* or *repeat*. Play and name these notes.

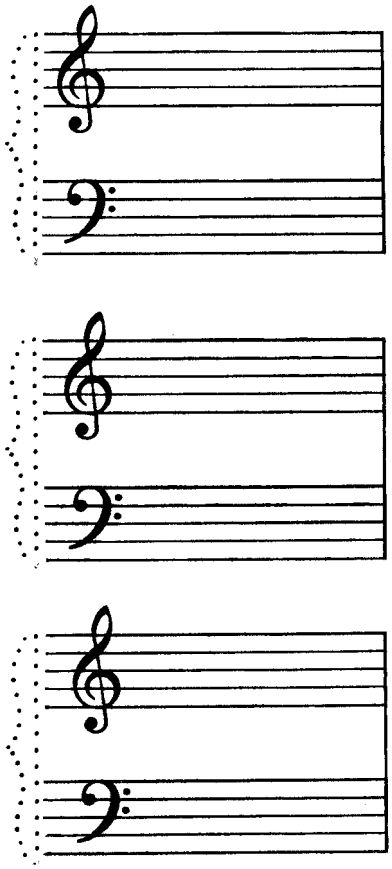


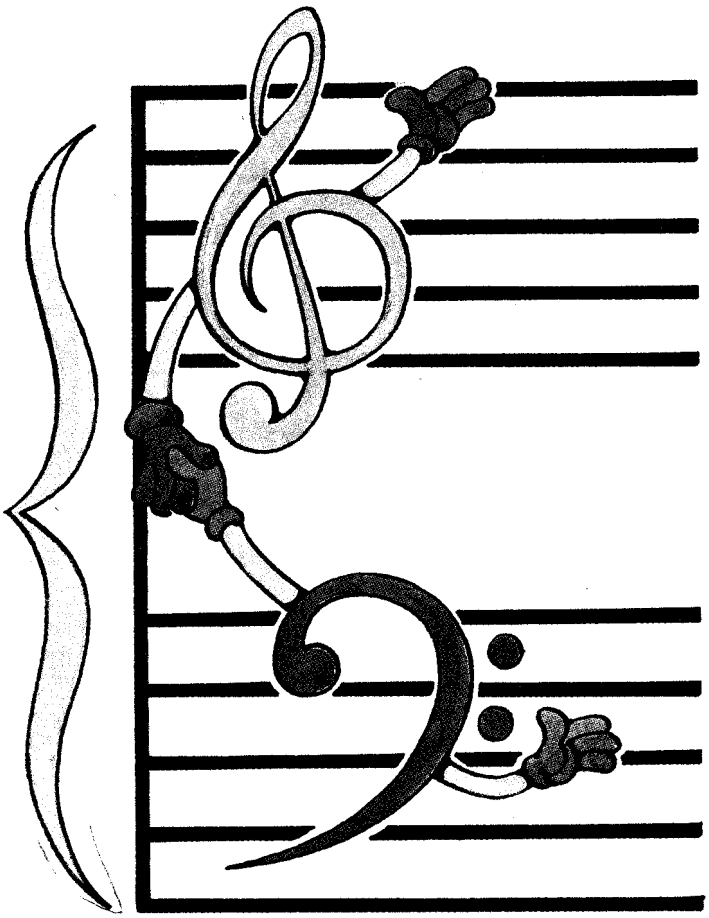
The Grand Staff

The **grand staff** is formed by joining the treble staff and bass staff with a **brace** and **bar line**.

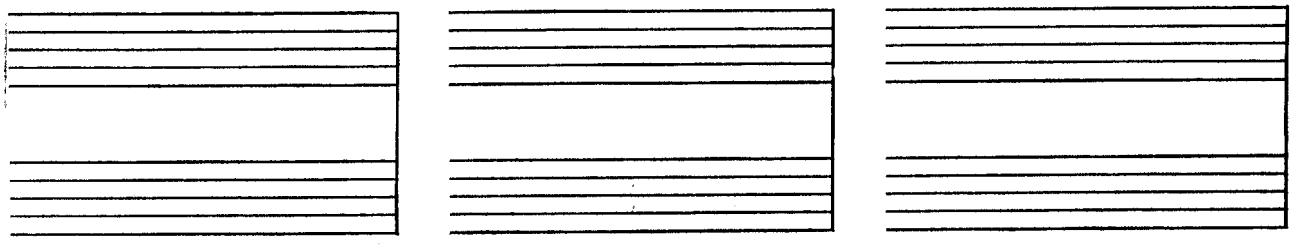


57. Trace these braces and bar lines to form grand staffs. Use a ruler to draw the bar lines.

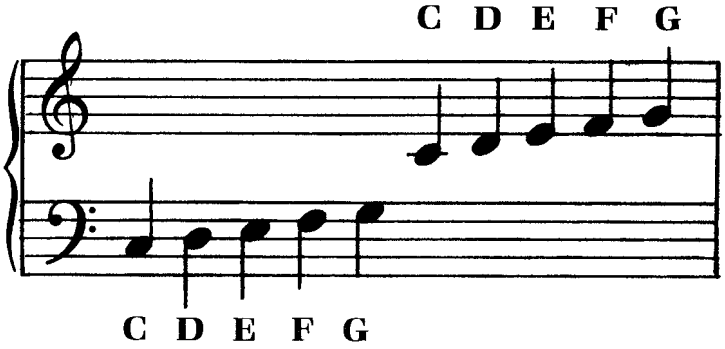




58. Draw braces and bar lines to form grand staffs. Draw treble and bass clef signs.

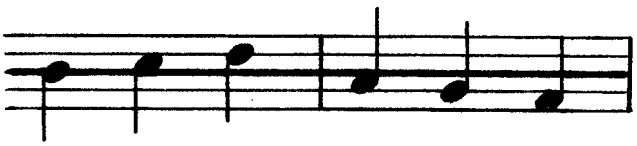


C Position



Notes **on or above** the middle line have **down stems**.

Notes **below** the middle line have **up stems**.



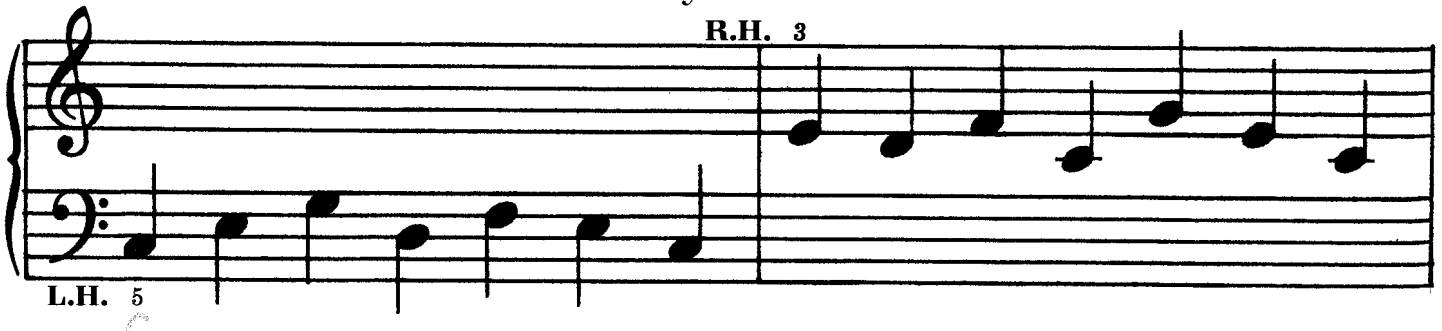
59. Draw a brace and bar line to form the grand staff.
Draw a treble and bass clef sign.
Draw the C position notes in the **bass clef** two times.
Play and name these notes.

C D E F G C D E F G

60. Draw a brace and bar line to form the grand staff.
Draw a treble and bass clef sign.
Draw the C position notes in the **treble clef** two times.
Play and name these notes.

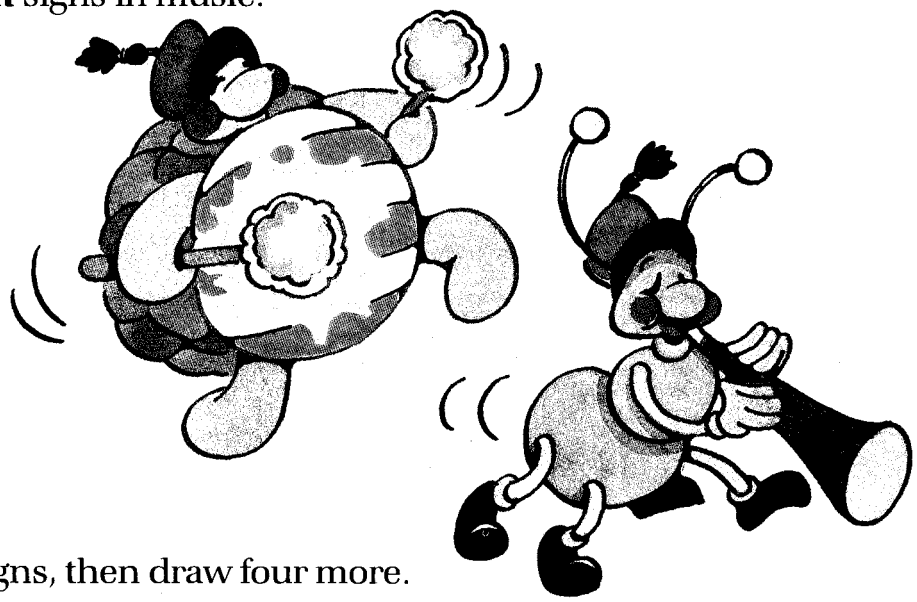
C D E F G C D E F G

61. Write the names of these notes. Play them.



Dynamics

Dynamics are **loud** and **soft** signs in music.



f means **loud**.
Its Italian name is ***forte***.

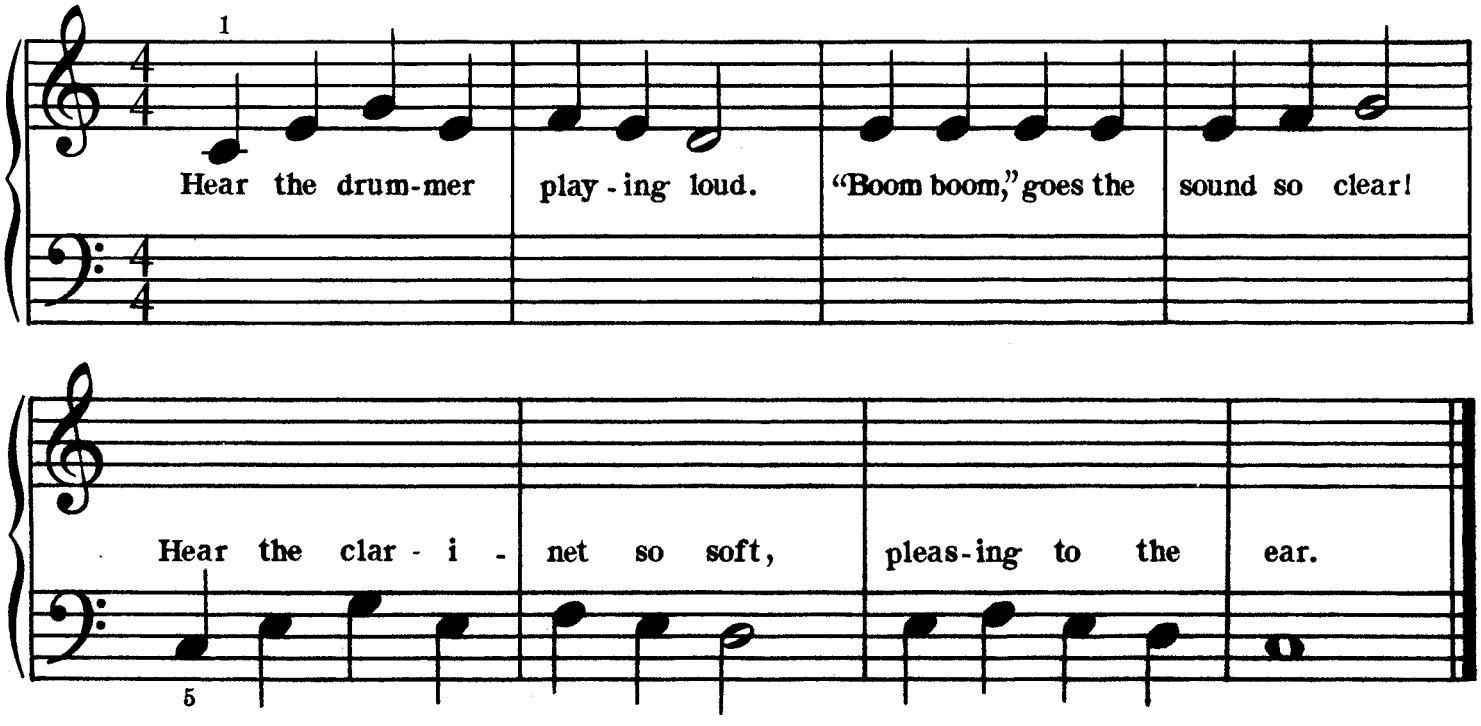
p means **soft**.
Its Italian name is ***piano***.

62. Trace the first two ***f*** signs, then draw four more.

63. Trace the first two ***p*** signs, then draw four more.

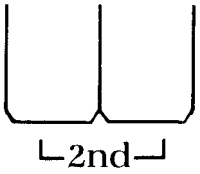
64. Read the words of this song.
At the beginning of each line, write the dynamic sign that matches the words of that line. Play this piece.

Our School Band

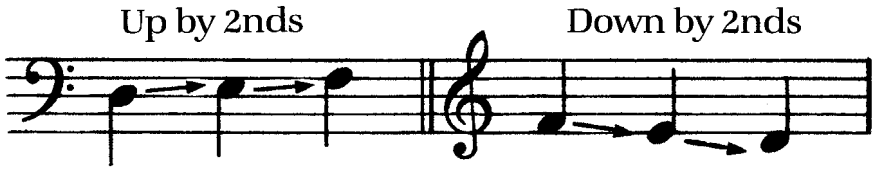


Measuring Intervals

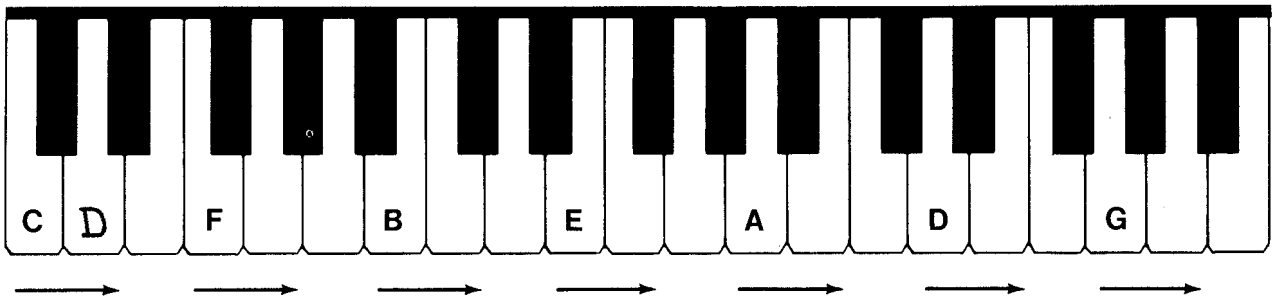
2nd The distance from one key to the next key is a **2nd**.



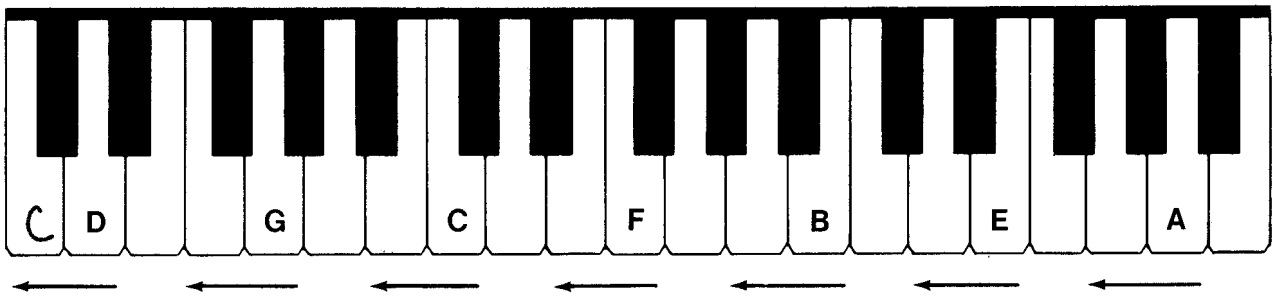
On the staff a 2nd is either line to space or space to line.



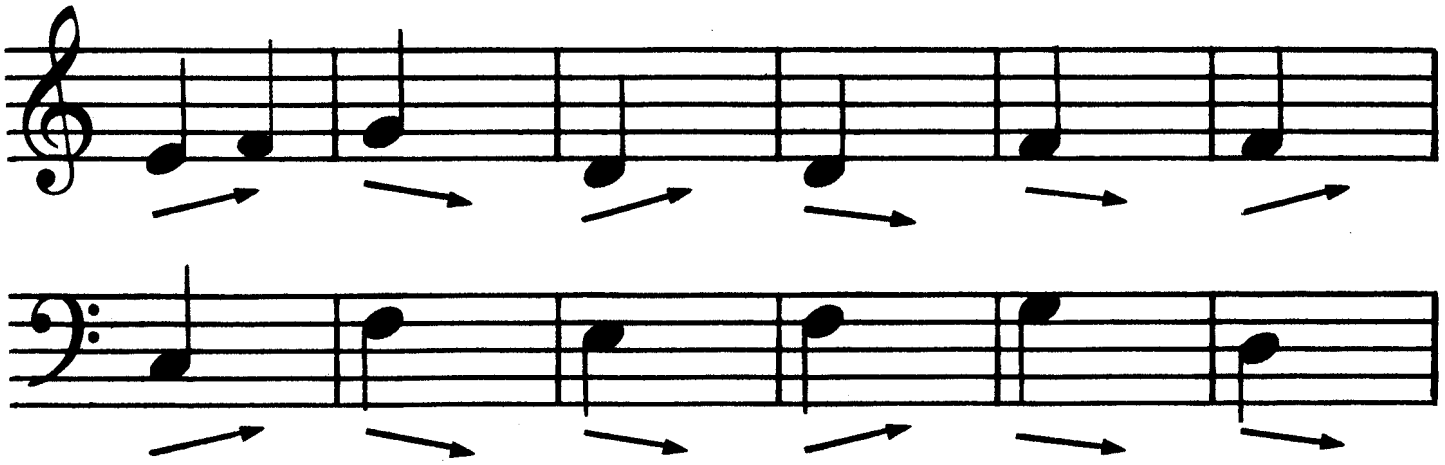
65. Write an interval of a 2nd **up** from the given letters. Play these intervals on your piano. Use either hand.



66. Write an interval of a 2nd **down** from the given letters. Play these intervals on your piano. Use either hand.

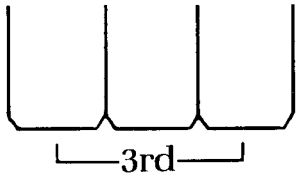


67. Draw a note an interval of a 2nd from the given note. Draw the note above if the arrow is up, or below if the arrow is down. Play and name these notes.

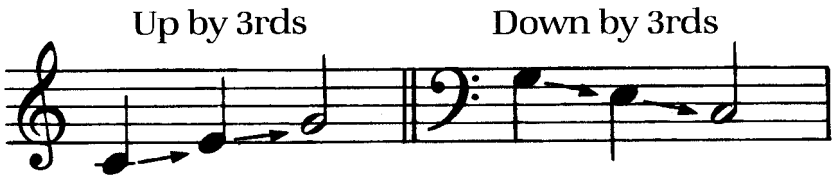


3rd

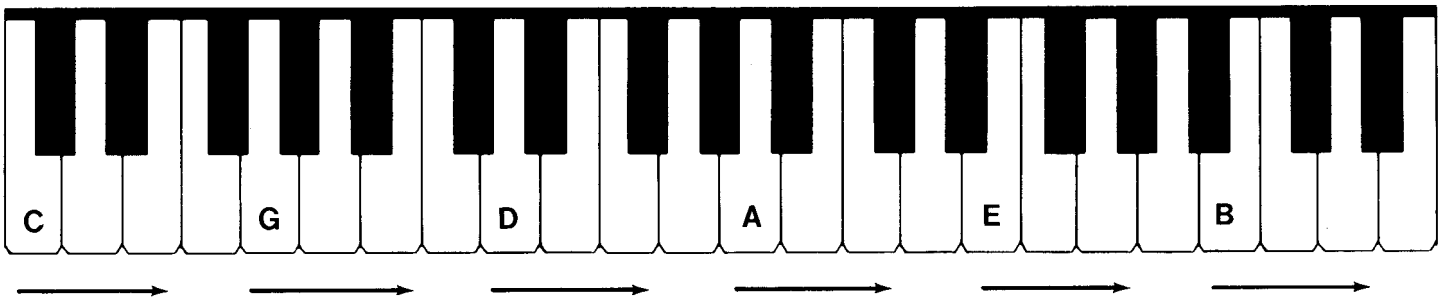
One skipped key is a **3rd**.



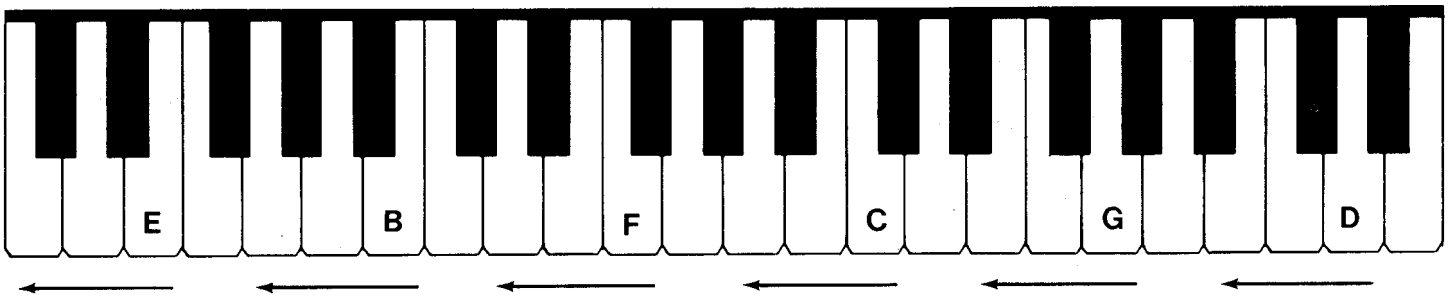
On the staff a 3rd is either line to line or space to space.



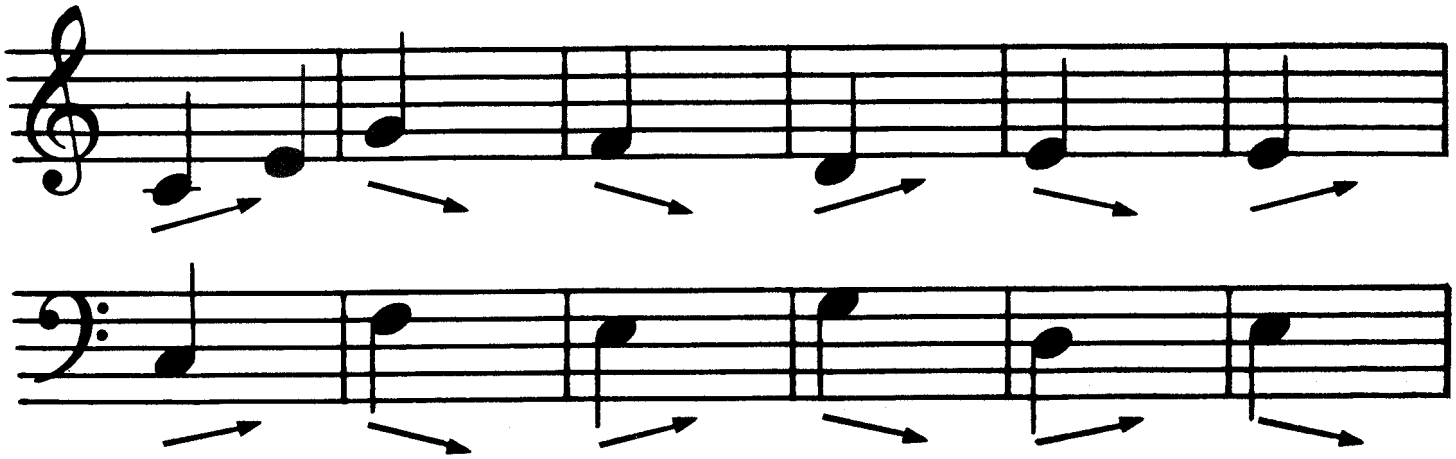
68. Write an interval of a 3rd **up** from the given letters. Play these intervals on your piano. Use either hand.



69. Write an interval of a 3rd **down** from the given letters. Play these intervals on your piano. Use either hand.

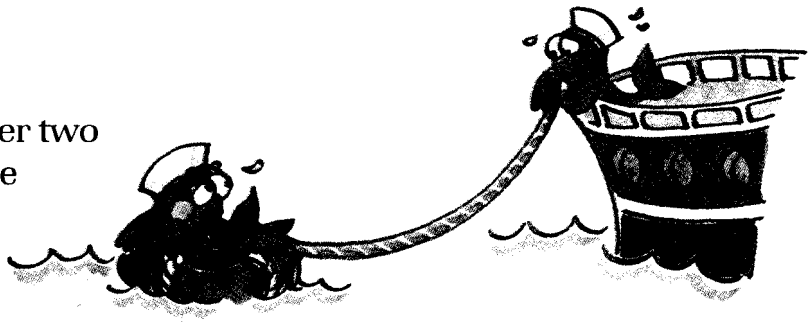


70. Draw a note an interval of a 3rd from the given note. Draw the note above if the arrow is up, or below if the arrow is down. Play and name these notes.



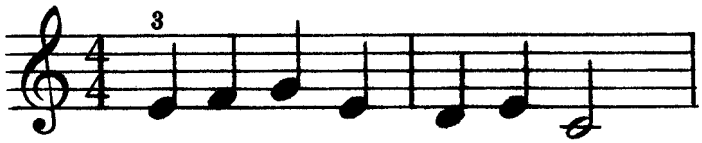
The Slur

The **slur** is a curved line over or under two or more **different** notes that are to be played legato (smooth, connected).

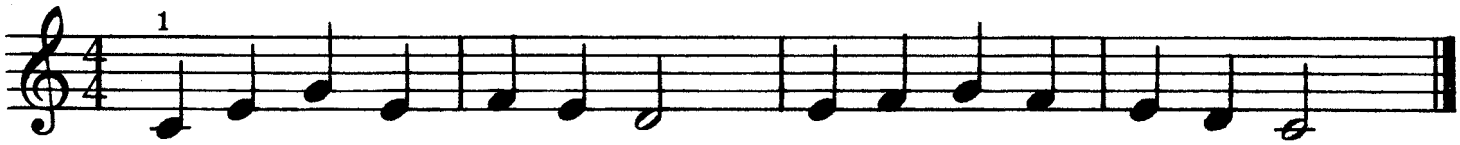


71. Draw a slur **over** these notes. Play these notes legato.

Draw a slur **under** these notes. Play these notes legato.



72. Draw a slur **under** these notes. Write the interval names (2nd, 3rd) on the lines below. Play these notes legato.

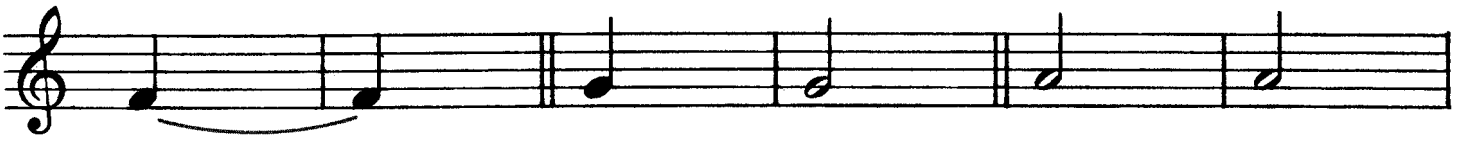


3rd _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

The Tie

The **tie** is a curved line which connects notes that are on the **same** line or space. Play the first note and hold it for the value of both notes.

73. Draw a tie to these pairs of same notes. Write the total number of counts for the tied notes on the lines below.

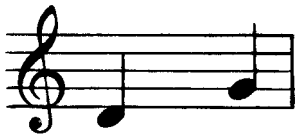
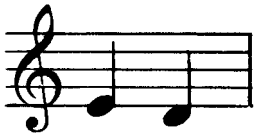


2 counts _____ _____

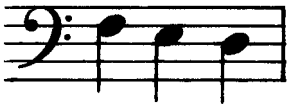
_____ _____ _____

Note-Spelling Game

In this game, write the note names in capital letters on the lines below.

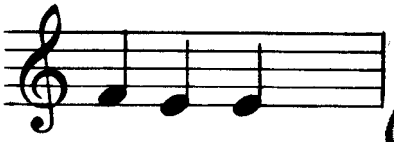
I had a __ **O** __ whose name was __ __ .



He always begged to be __ __ __ .

After school I saw his __ **A** __ __ ,

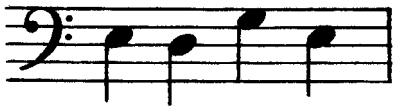
and I knew he was ready to **R A** __ __ .



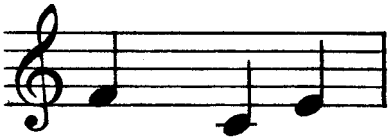
I'd throw the ball, and his __ __ __ **T**

would fly, and off he'd go like a streak in the sky!

My __ **A** __ loved to see us play,



and he'd watch by the __ __ __ __ of the house every day.



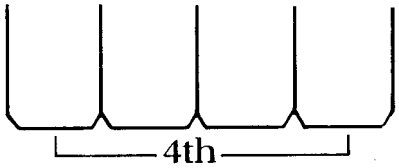
My mom's __ **A** __ __ would light up, too,

and when she saw the fun we had, she'd shout Ya-hoo!

Measuring Intervals

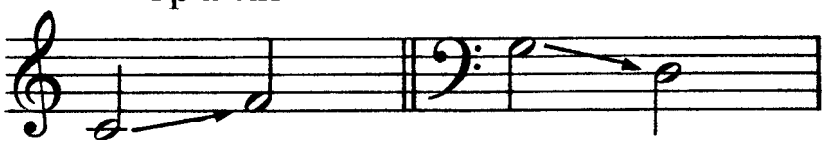
4th

Two skipped keys is a **4th**.

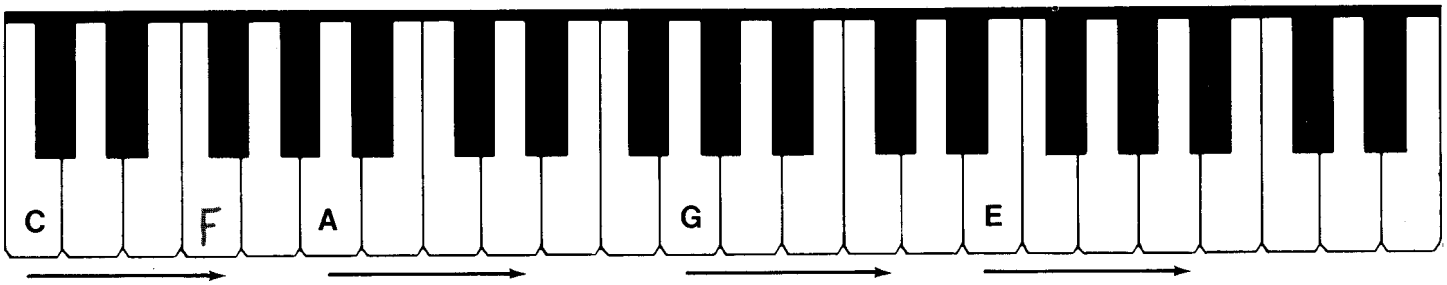


On the staff a 4th is either line to space or space to line.

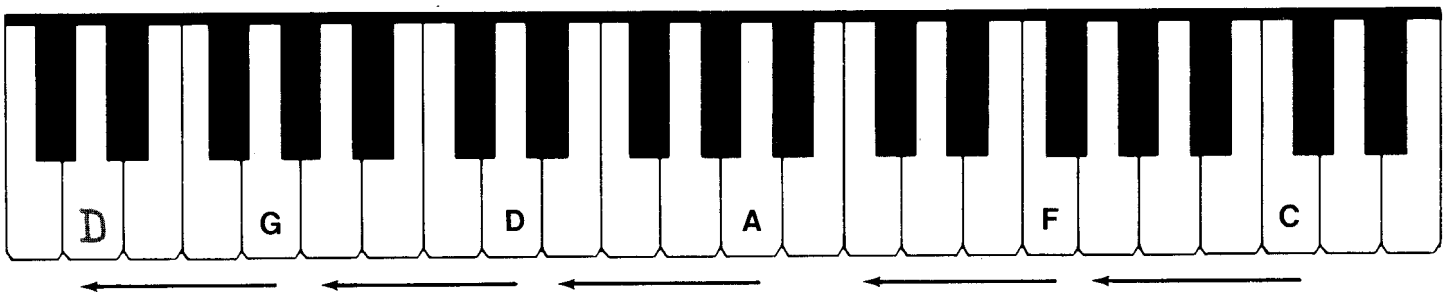
Up a 4th Down a 4th



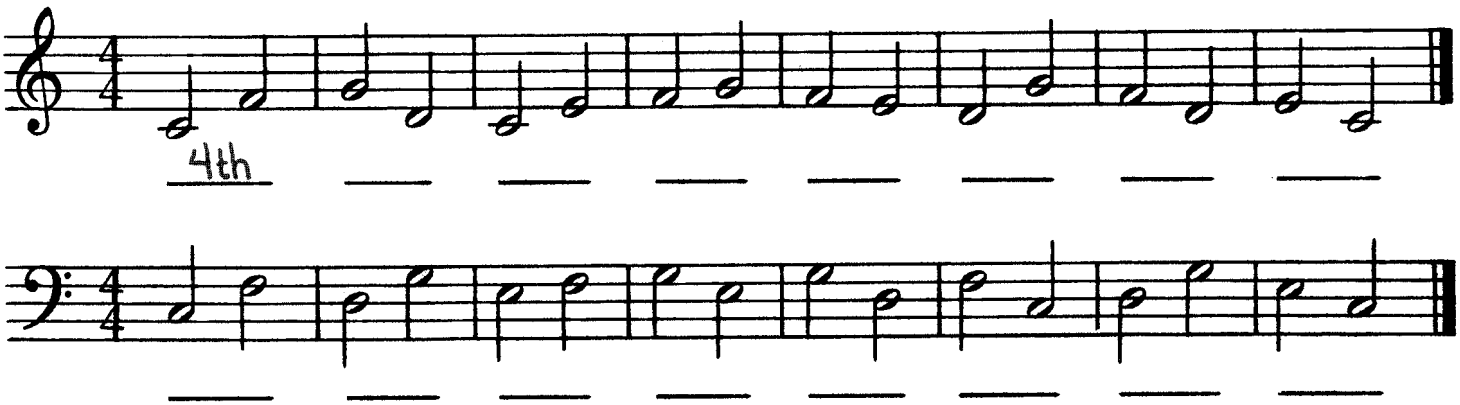
74. Write an interval of a 4th **up** from the given letters.
Play these intervals on your piano. Use either hand.



75. Write an interval of a 4th **down** from the given letters.
Play these intervals on your piano.

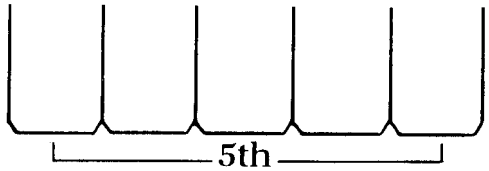


76. Write the names of these intervals. Play and name these notes.

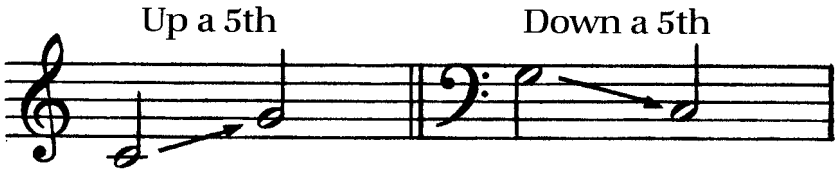


5th

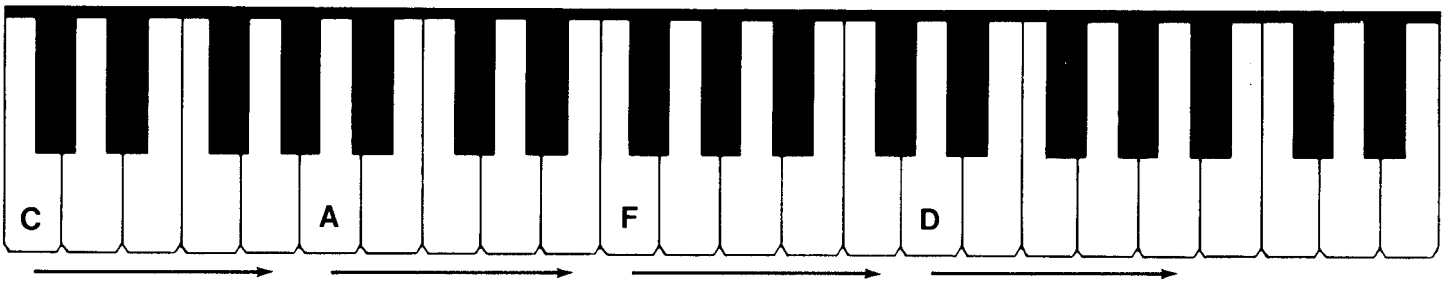
Three skipped keys is a **5th**.



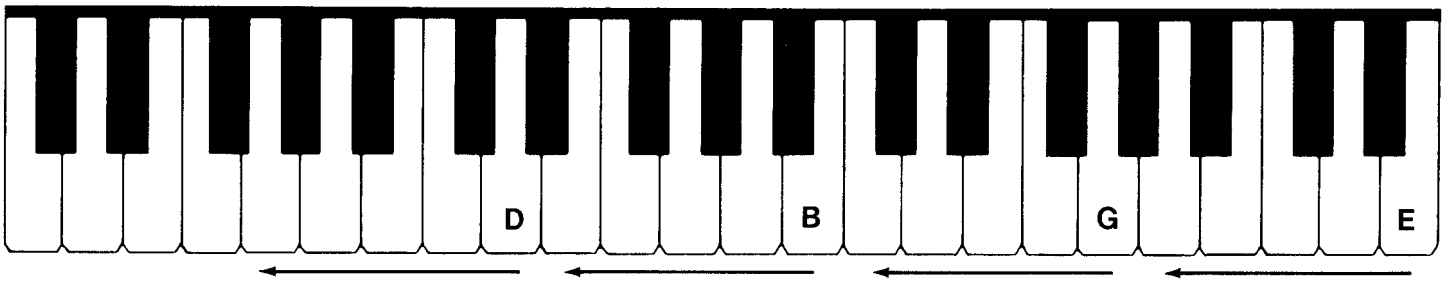
On the staff a 5th is either line to line or space to space.



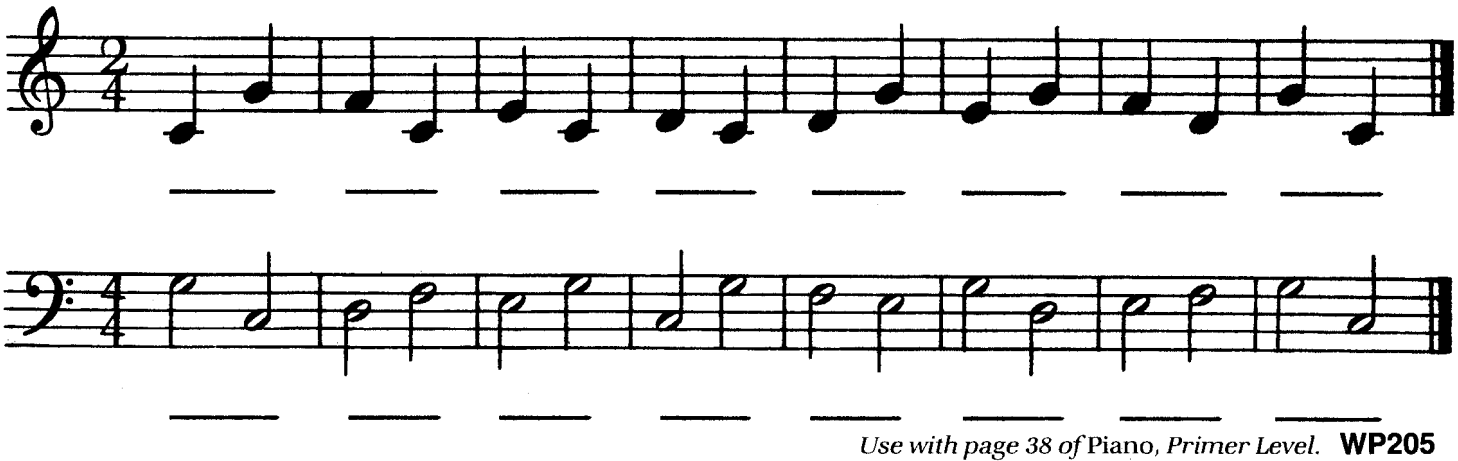
77. Write an interval of a 5th **up** from the given letters.
Play these intervals on your piano. Use either hand.



78. Write an interval of a 5th **down** from the given letters.
Play these intervals on your piano. Use either hand.

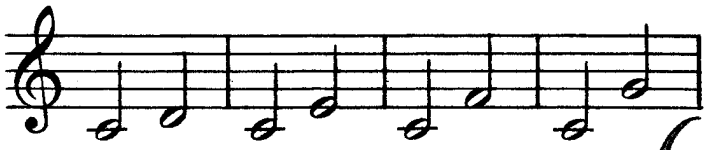


79. Write the names of these intervals. Play and name these notes.

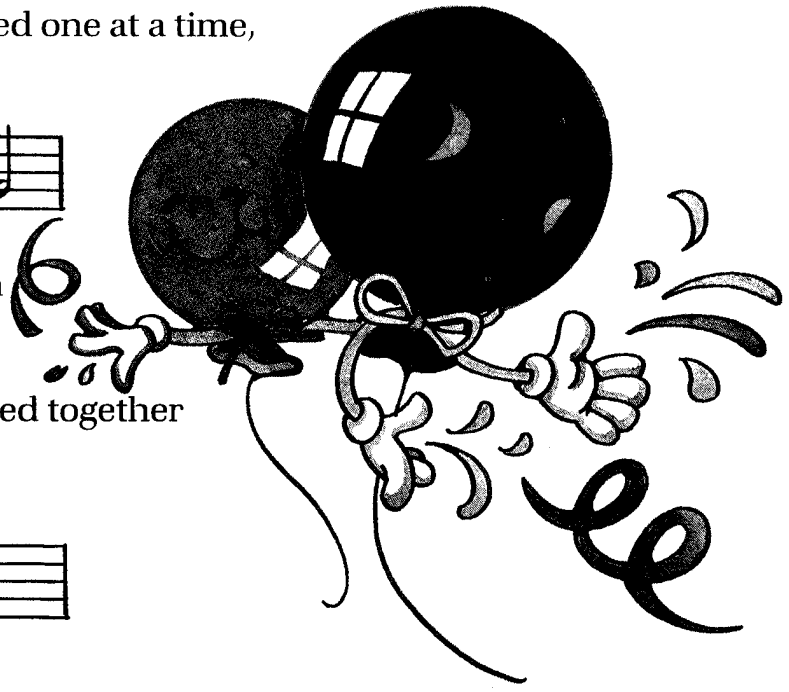


Melodic and Harmonic Intervals

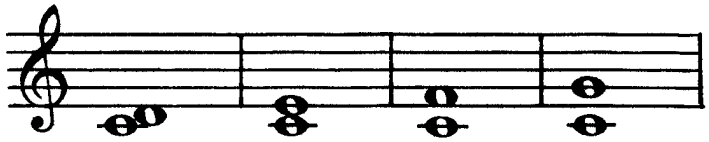
Melodic intervals are single notes played one at a time, like notes in a melody.



2nd 3rd 4th 5th

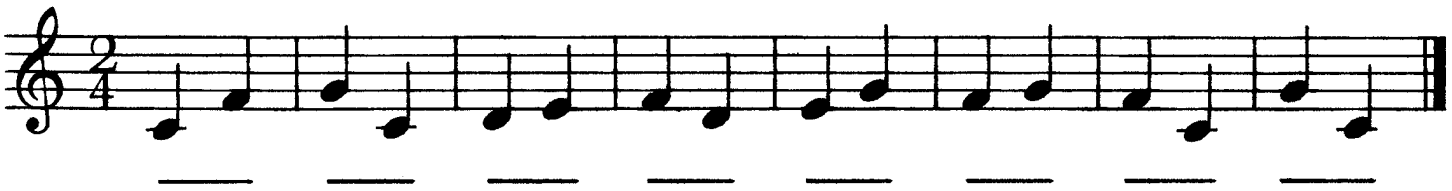


Harmonic intervals are two notes played together to make harmony in music.

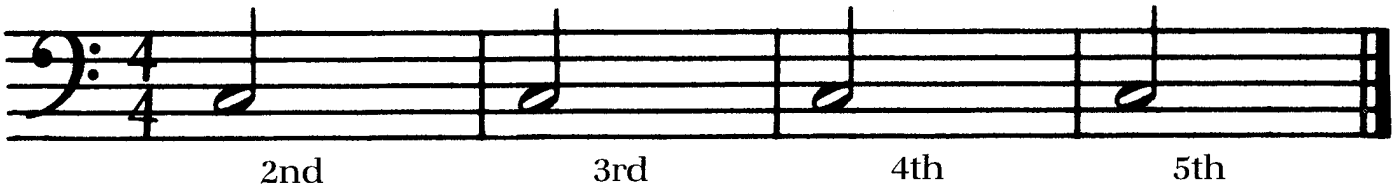


2nd 3rd 4th 5th

80. Write the names of these melodic intervals. Play and name these intervals.

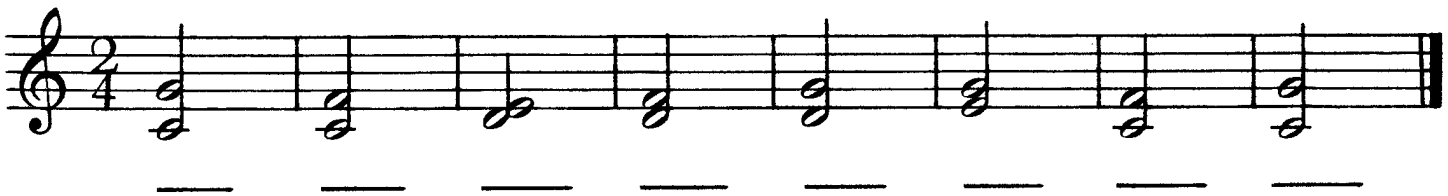


81. Draw a half note after the one given to form a melodic interval. Play them.

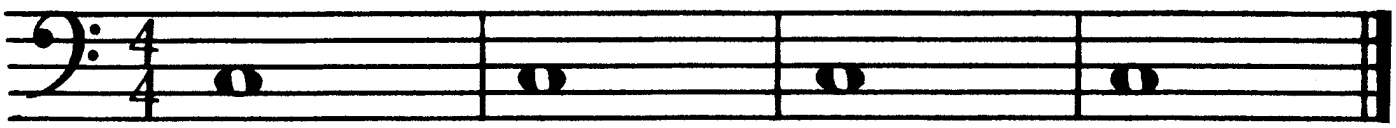


2nd 3rd 4th 5th

82. Write the names of these harmonic intervals. Play them.



83. Draw a whole note above the one given to form a harmonic interval. Play them.



2nd 3rd 4th 5th

Rest Signs

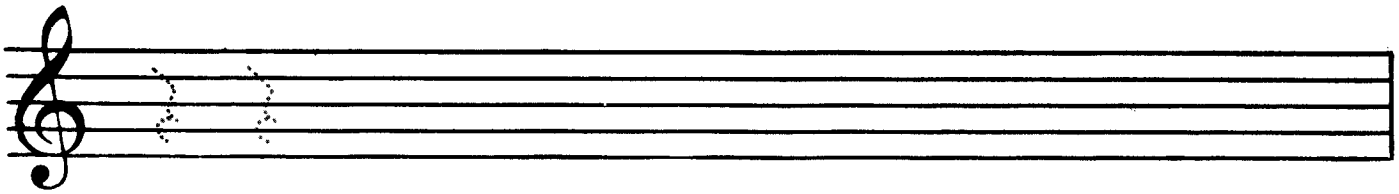
Rest signs are used in music for **silence**.

Quarter rest
Rest 1 beat.

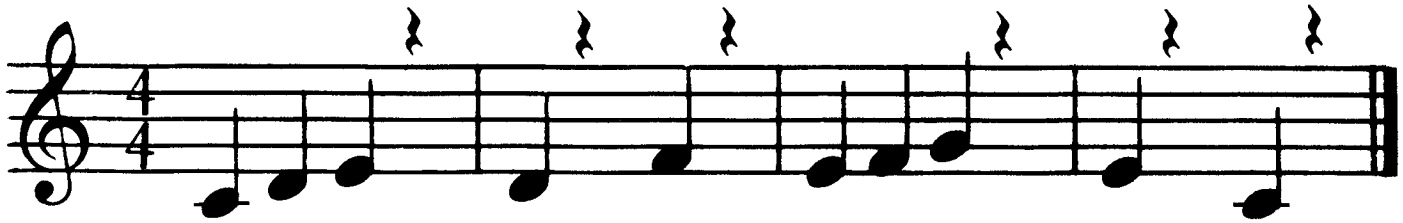
Half rest
Rest 2 beats.

Whole rest
Rest 4 beats,
or whole measure.

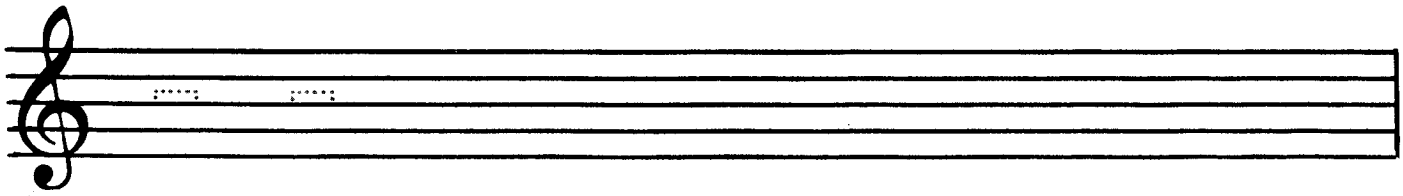
84. Trace the first two quarter rests, then draw four more.



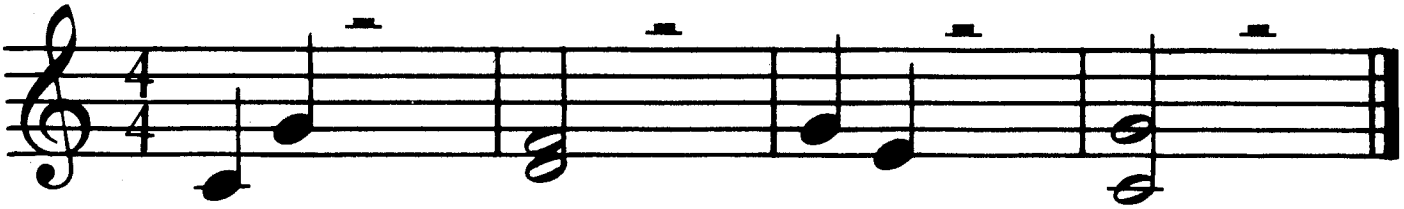
85. Draw quarter rests in this melody to complete the correct number of beats in each measure.



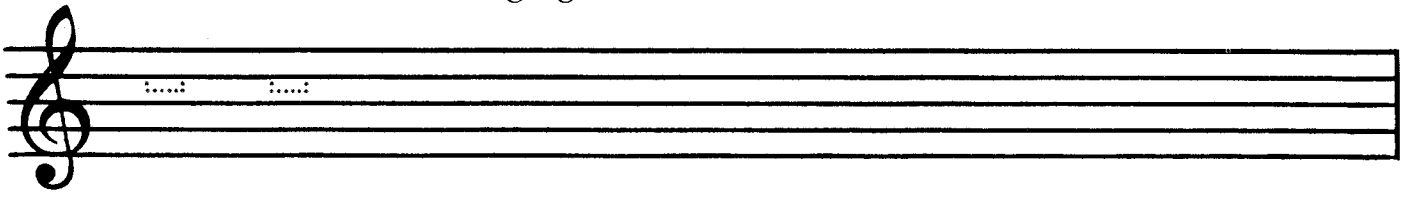
86. Fill in the first two half rests, then draw four more.
Draw the half rests sitting on the 3rd line.



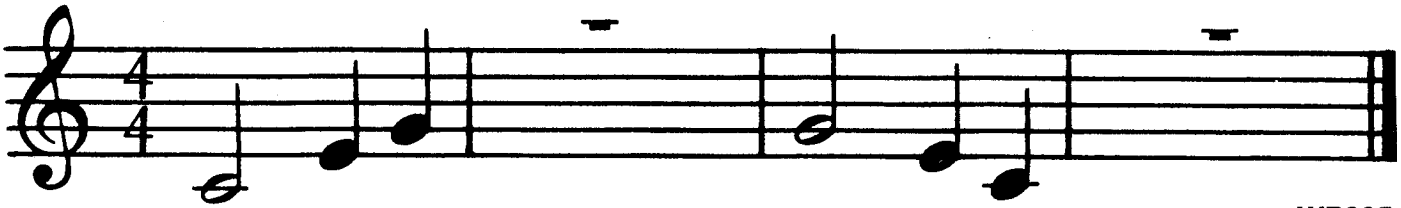
87. Draw half rests in this melody to complete the correct number of beats in each measure.



88. Fill in the first two whole rests, then draw four more.
Draw the whole rests hanging down from the 4th line.



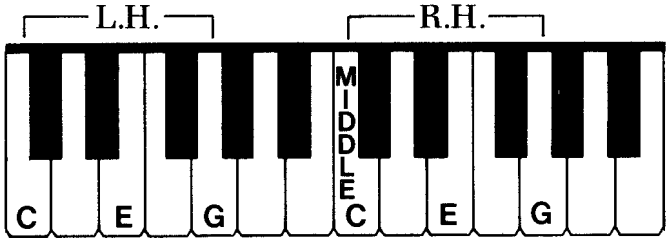
89. Draw whole rests in this melody to complete the correct number of beats in each measure.



The C Chord

The **C chord** is formed from **three** of the keys in the C position:

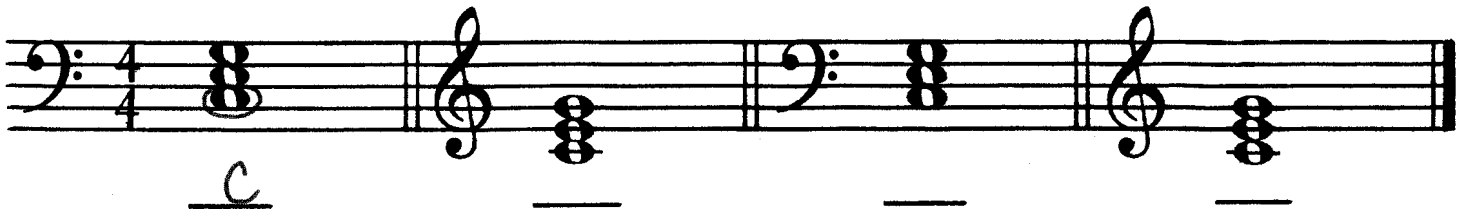
C E G



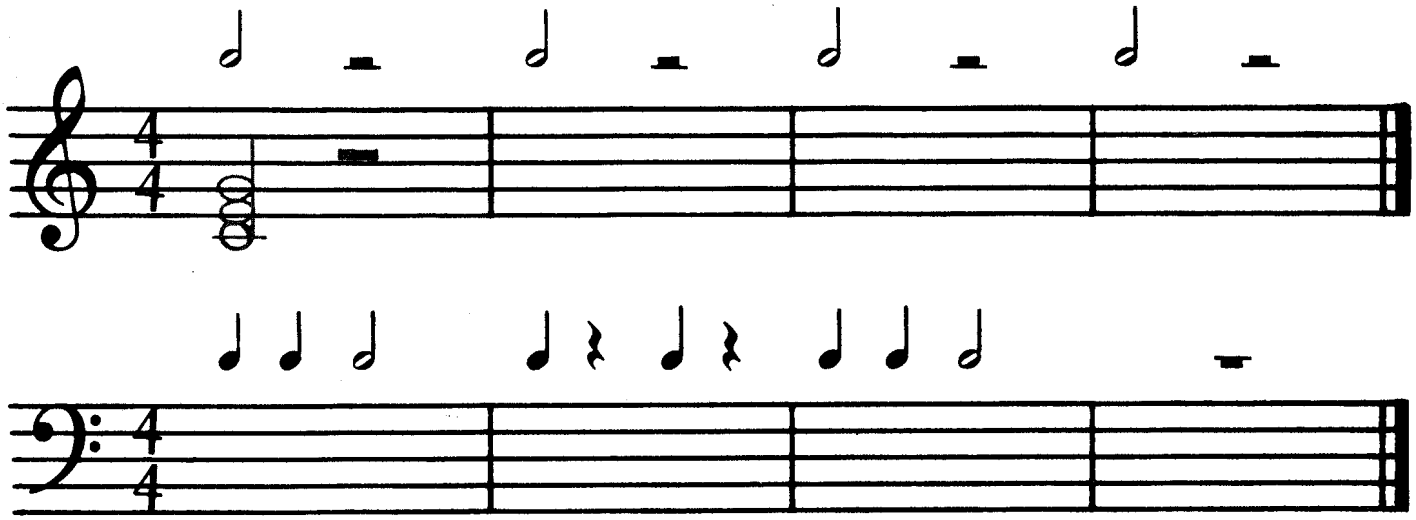
The **bottom** note names the chord.

Solid chords: notes played together.

90. Circle the bottom note of each chord. Write the names of the chords on the lines below. Play these chords.

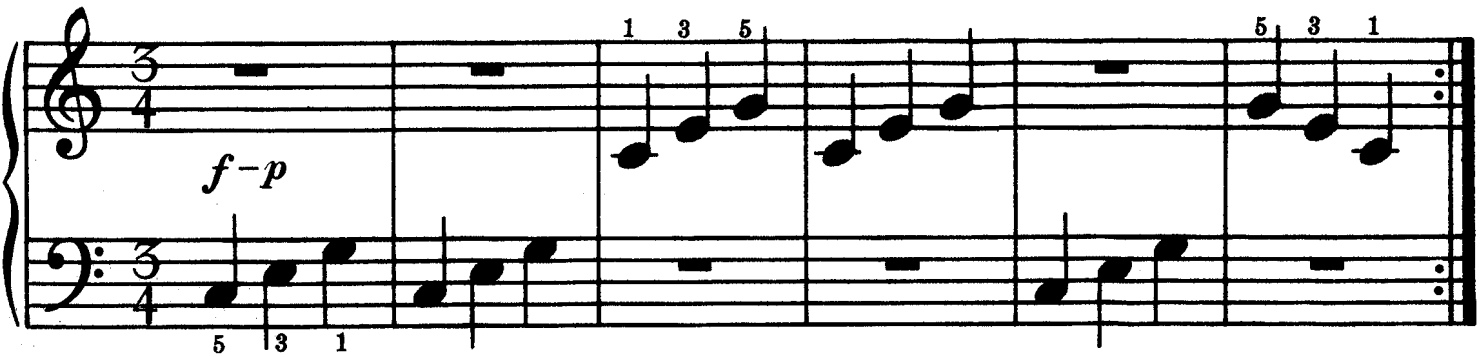


91. Draw these C chords and rests in the correct rhythm. Play them.

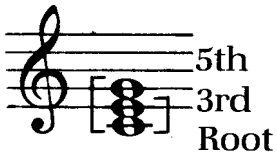


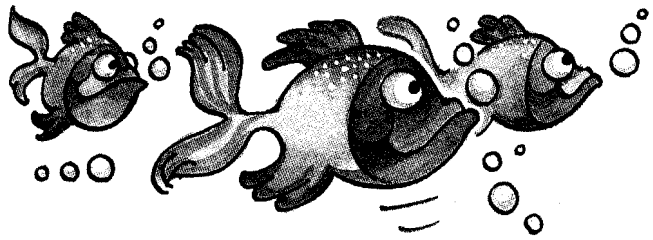
Broken chords: notes played one at a time.

92. Play these broken chords.



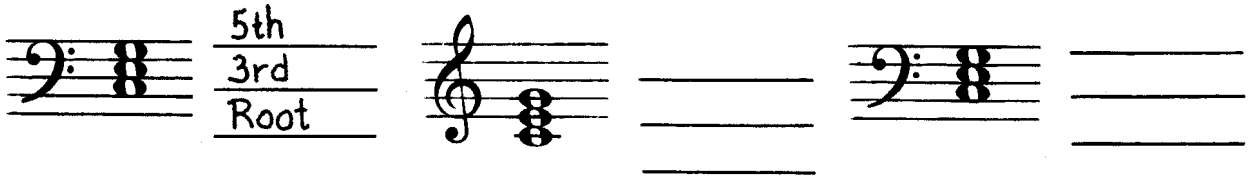
The three notes in a chord are **root, 3rd,** and **5th**.





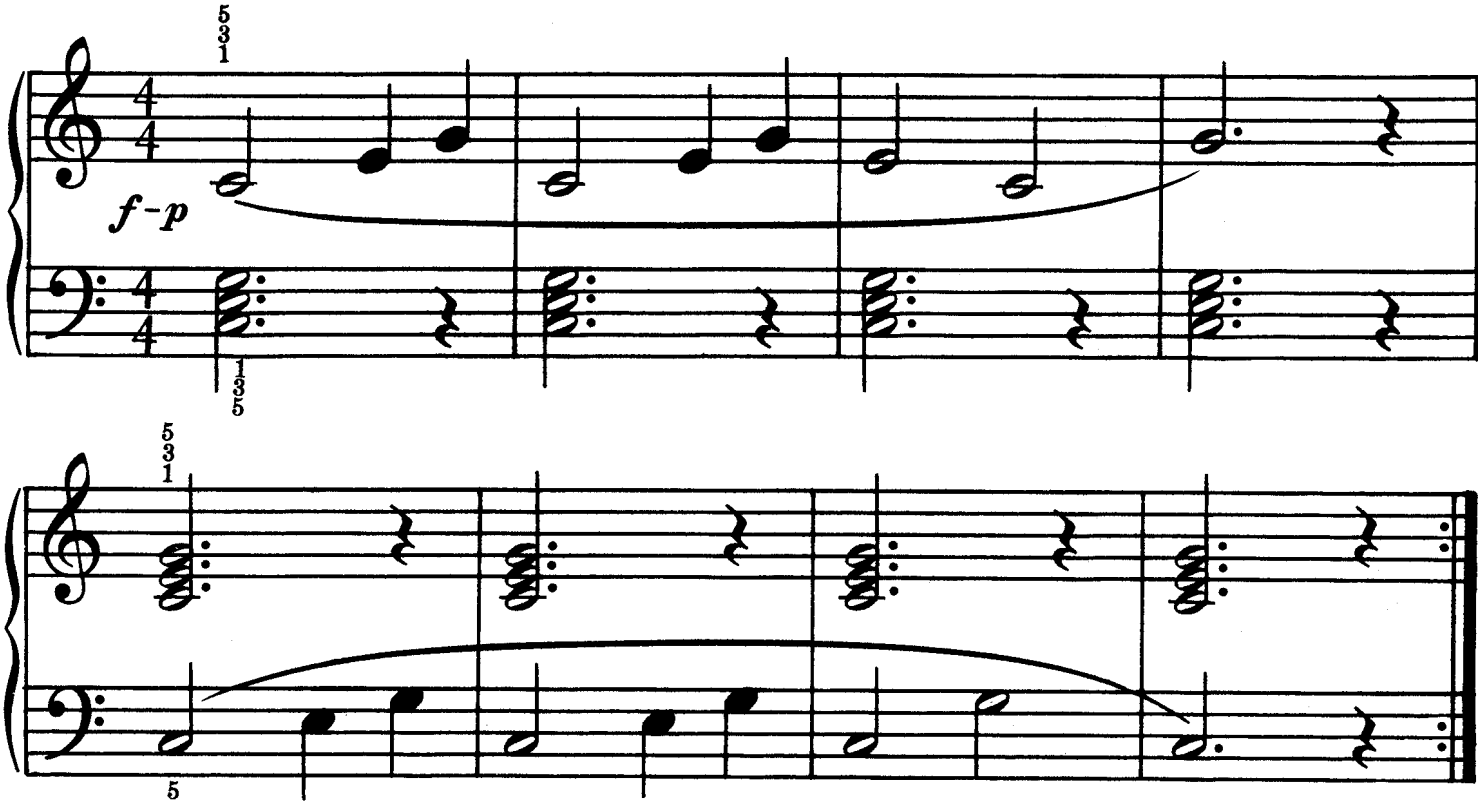
Measure the intervals from the bottom note to the middle note (3rd), then from the bottom note to the top note (5th).

93. Write the names of the intervals in these chords (root, 3rd, 5th).



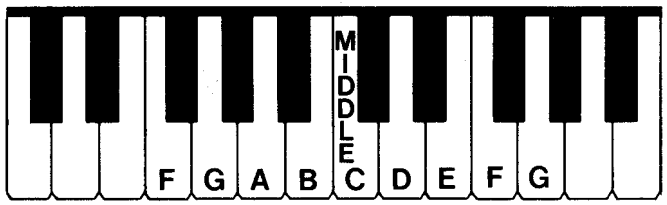
94. Play and count the rhythm for these C chords.

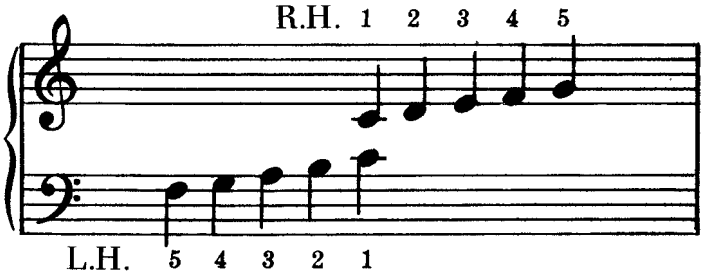
95. Play the solid chords softer than the broken chords in the music below! Count aloud while you play.

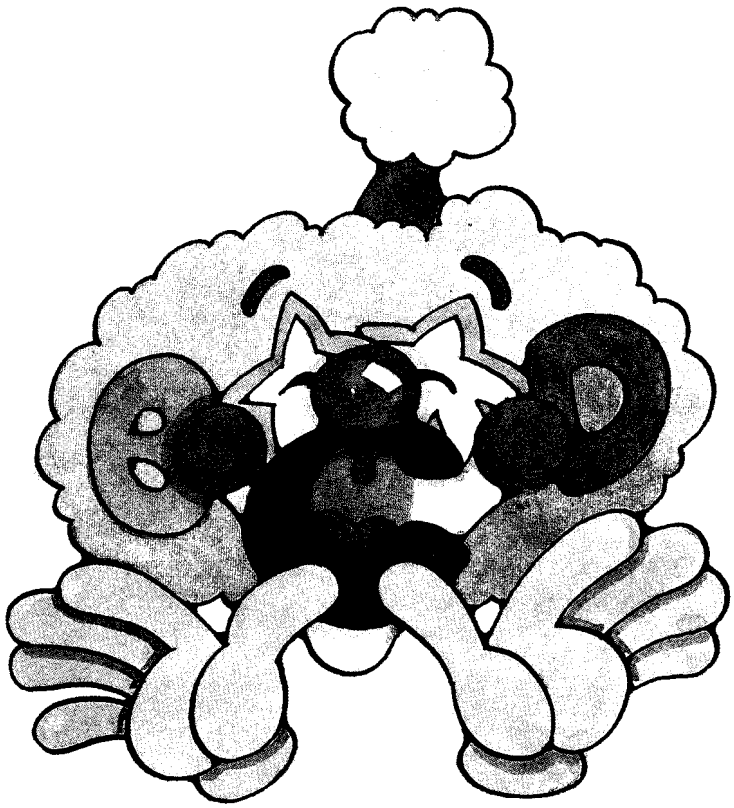


Middle C Position

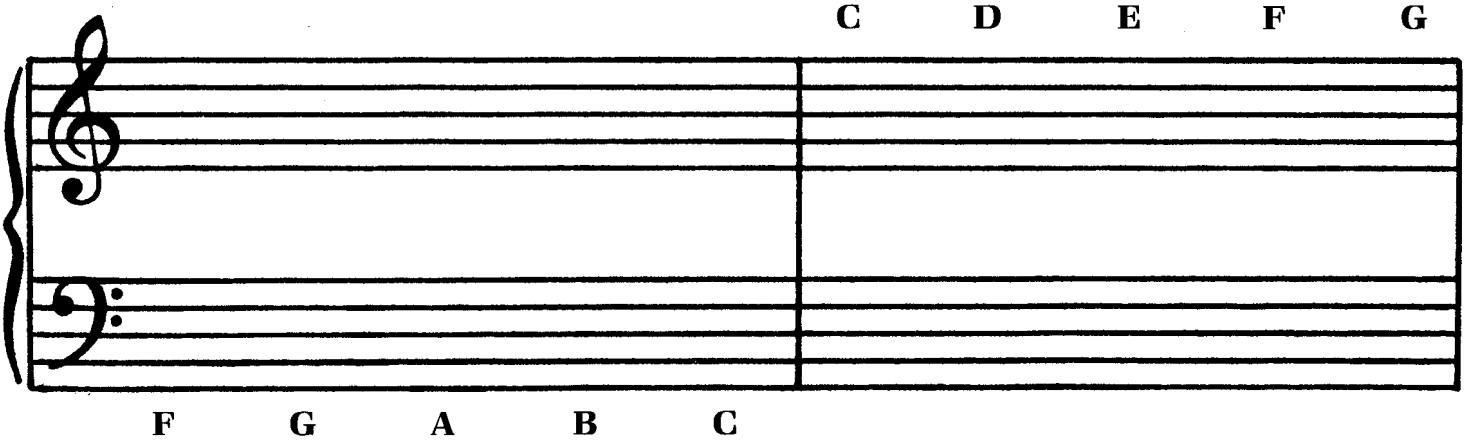
To play in the middle C position, place both thumbs on middle C.





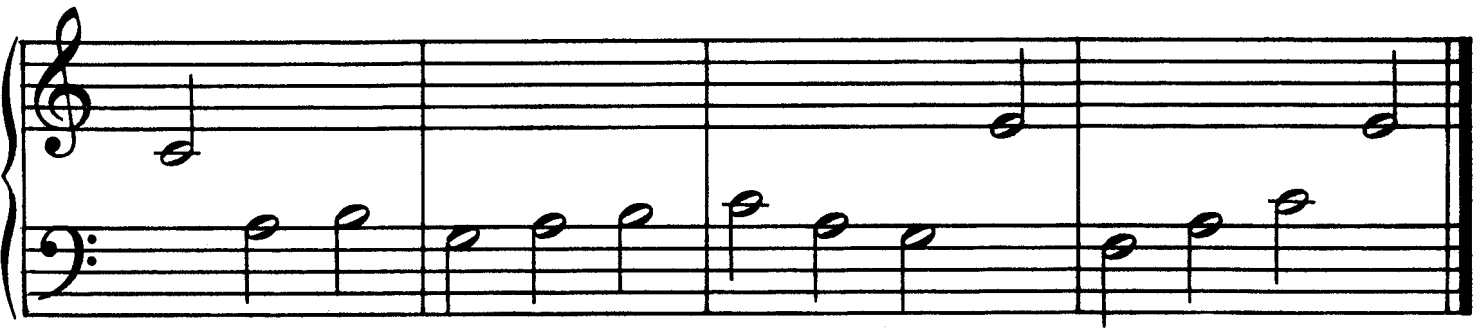


96. Draw quarter notes in the middle C position. Play and name these notes.

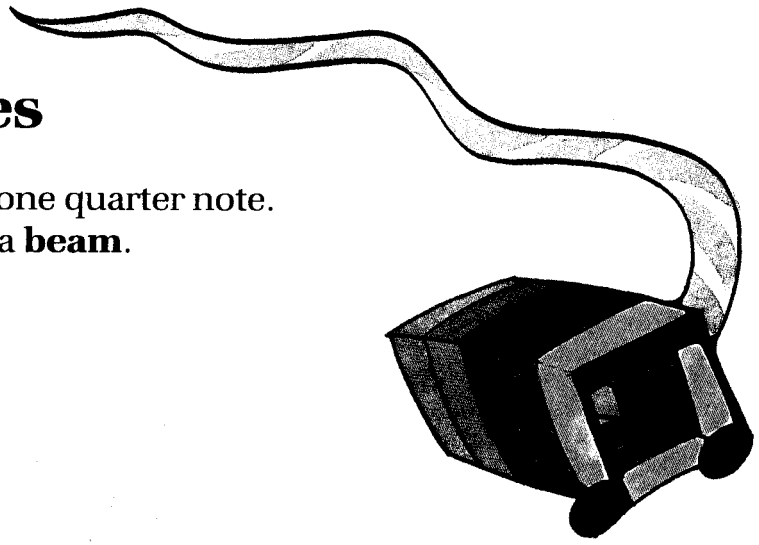


Note-Spelling Fun!

97. Write the letter names of these notes to spell words. Play and name these notes in the middle C position.



Two Eighth Notes



Two eighth notes equal one quarter note.
They are connected with a **beam**.

Beam

Beam

98. Add a beam to these pairs of notes to form two eighth notes.

Eighth notes may be counted with numbers by saying *"and"* after the number.

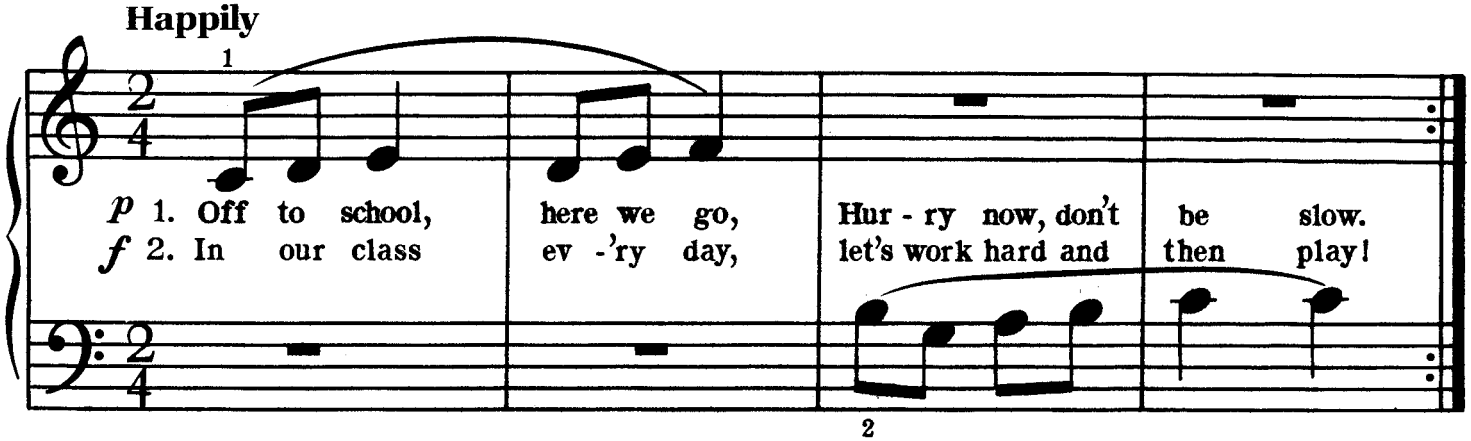
1 and 2 and 1 and 2 and

99. Clap and count the following rhythm.

Count: 1 and 2 and
or: two eighths quar-ter

100. Play this music and count aloud.
Use either of the counting systems shown on this page.

At School



Sharp Sign

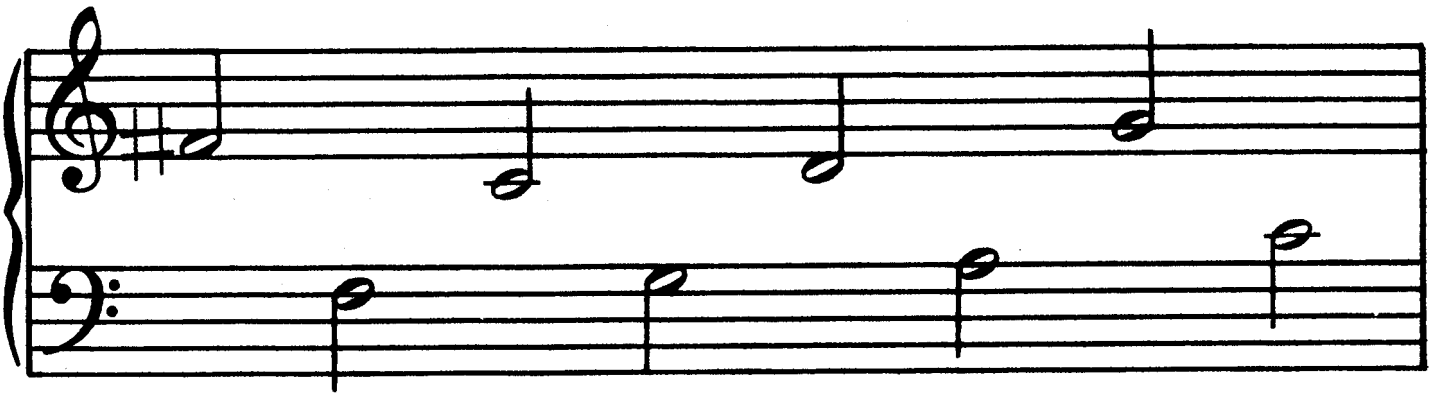
The **sharp sign** before a note means
to play the next key to the **right**.

101. Trace the first two sharp signs, then draw four more.
First draw two lines down.
Next, draw two heavy lines across.

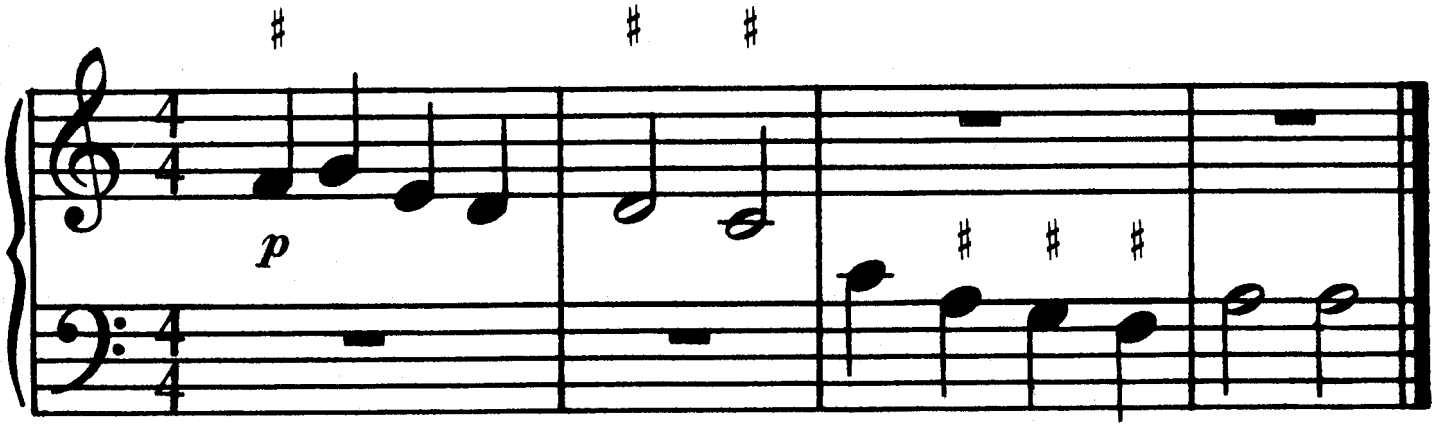
The "square" in the middle of the sharp is placed

on a **line** or in a **space**.

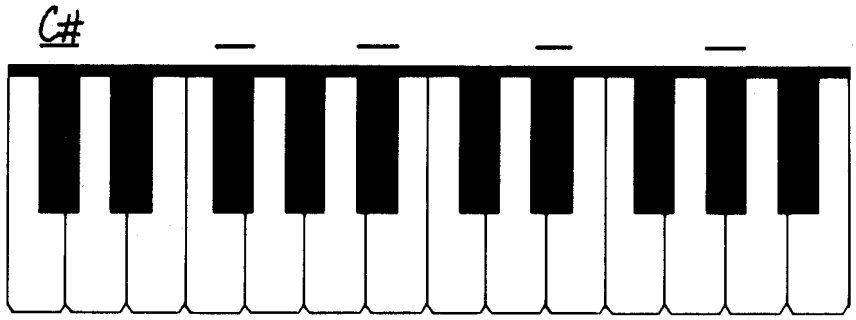
102. Draw a sharp before each note. Play and name these notes.



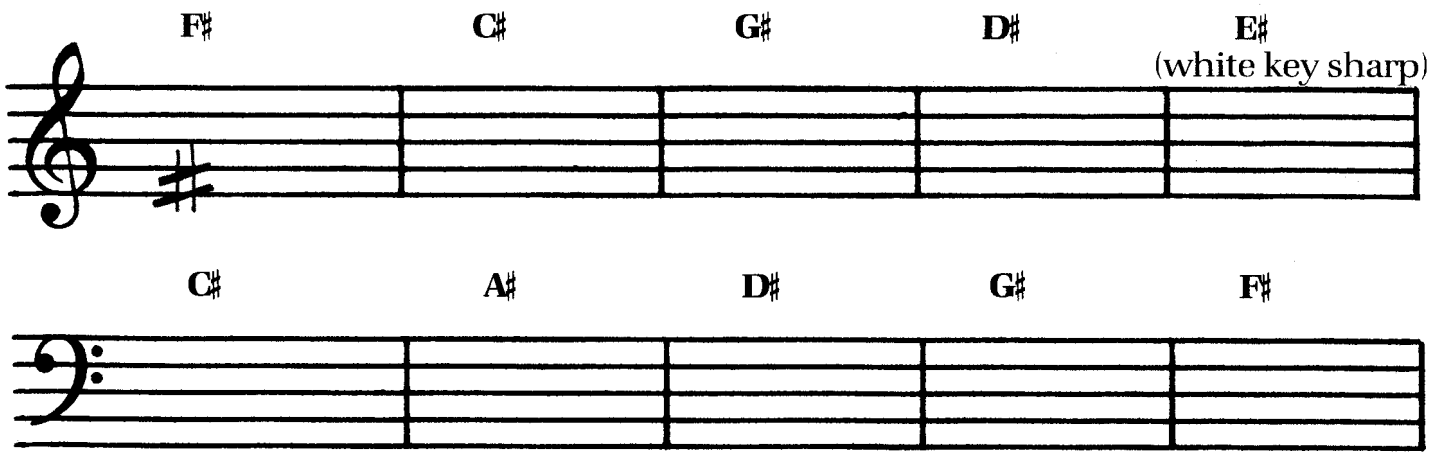
103. Draw a sharp before each note with a ♯ sign over it. Play and name these notes.



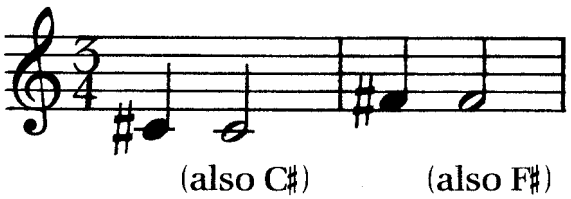
104. Write the names of these sharp keys. Play them.



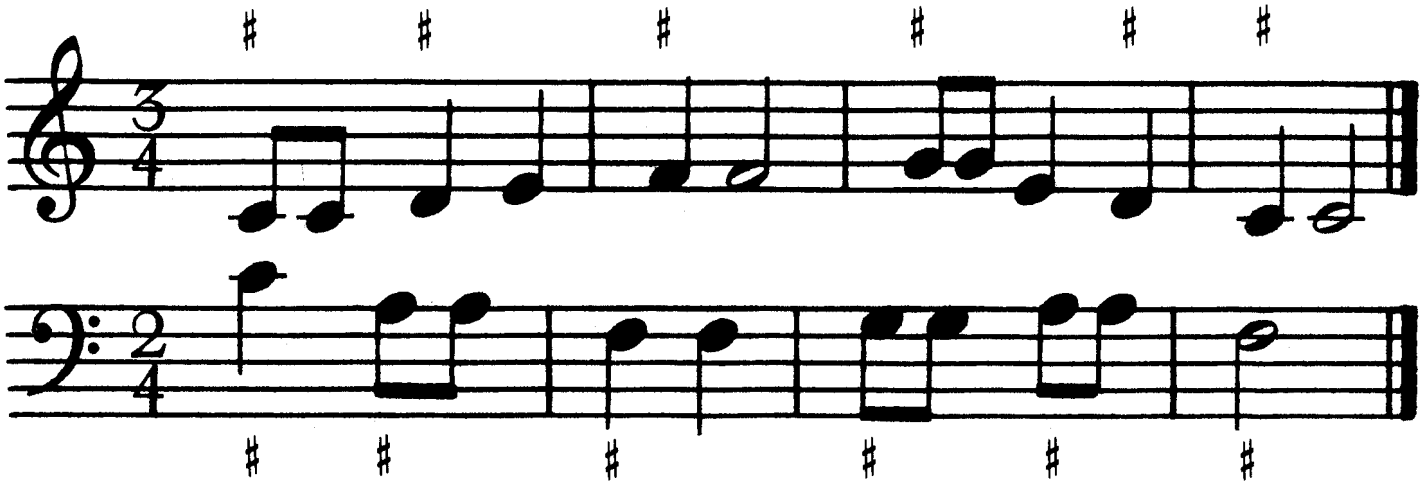
105. Draw these sharps on the staff. Play and name them.



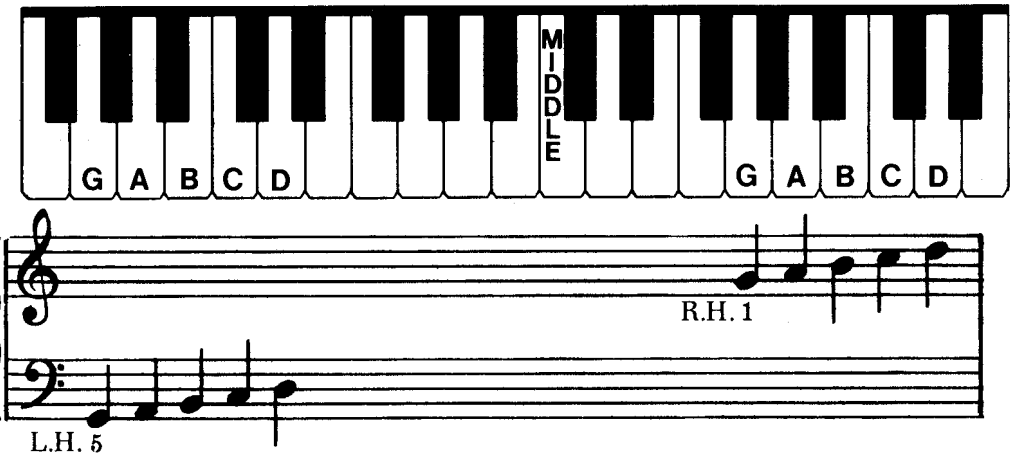
The sharp sign lasts for the **whole** measure.



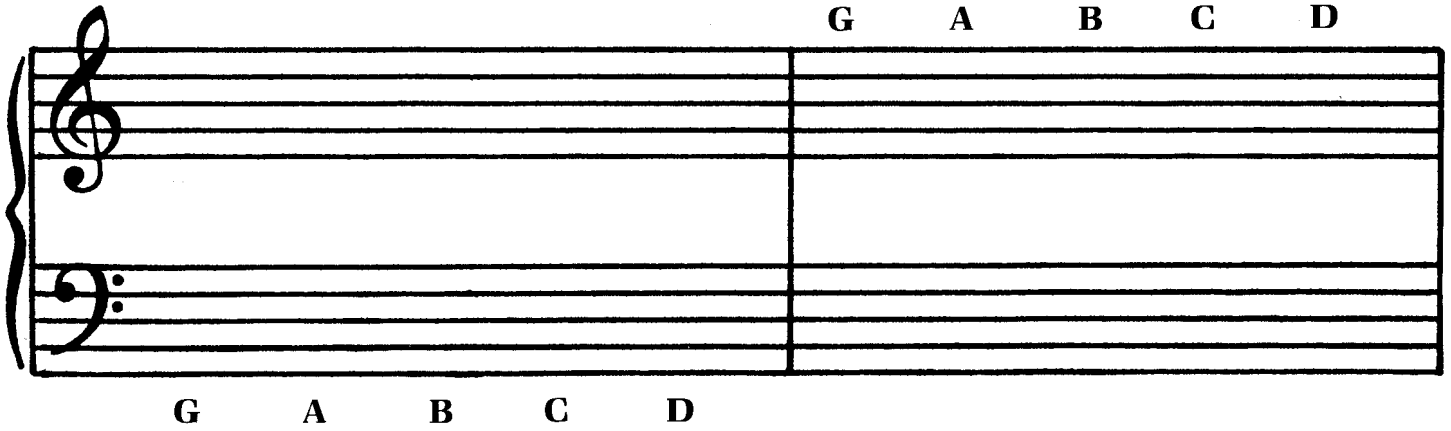
106. Draw a sharp before each note with a ♯ sign over or under it. Play and name these notes.



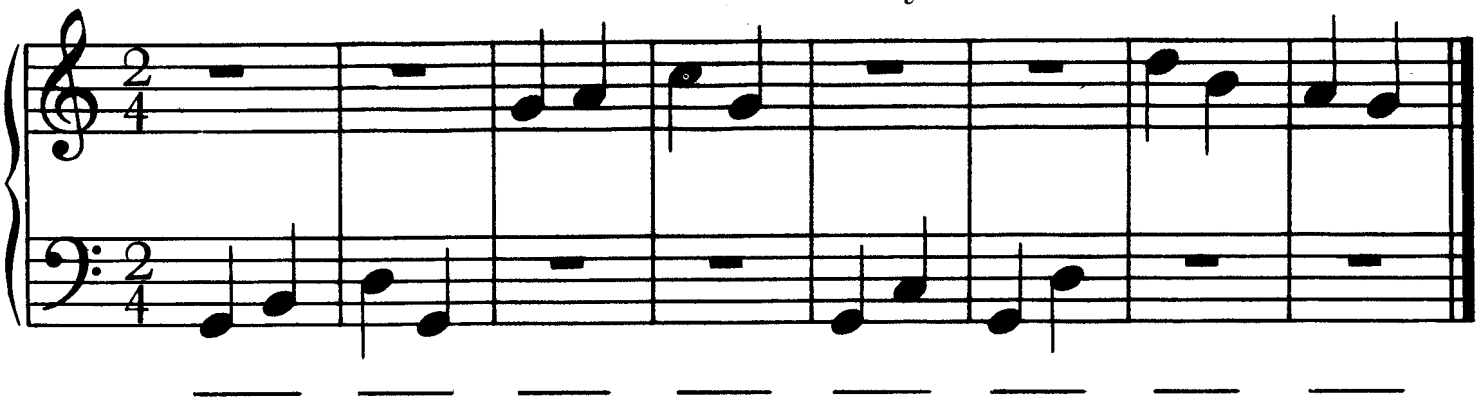
G Position



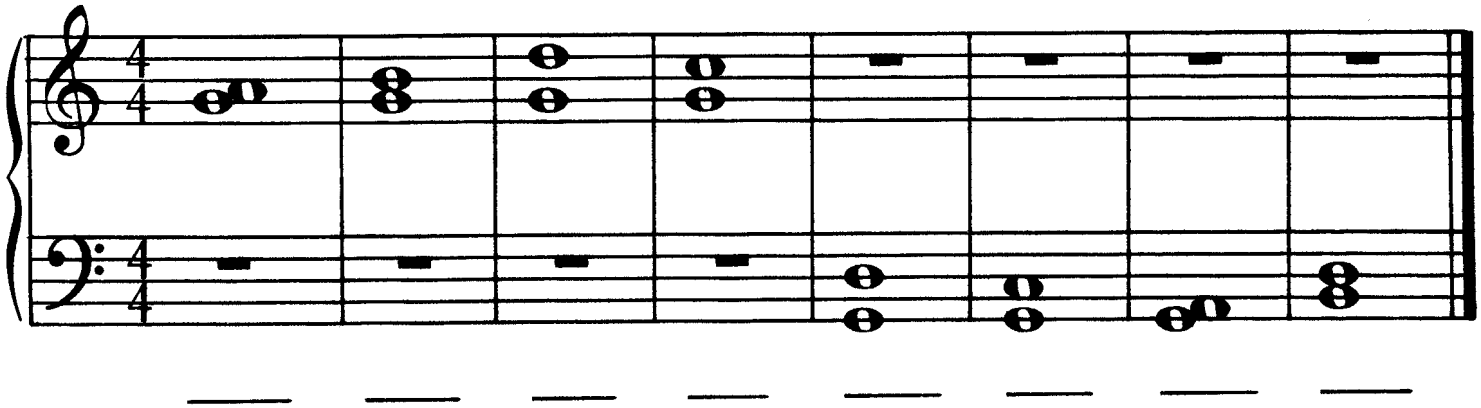
107. Draw quarter notes in the G position. Play and name these notes.



108. Write the names of these melodic intervals. Play them.

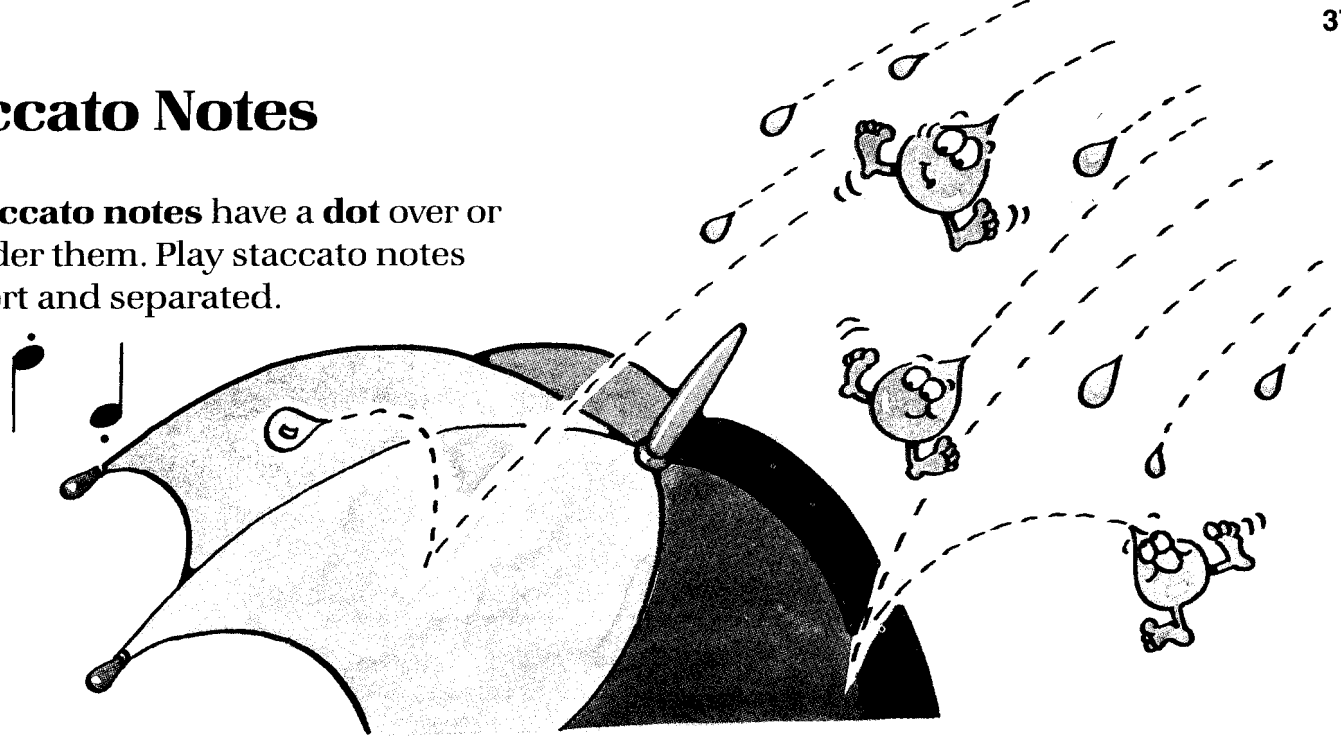


109. Write the names of these harmonic intervals. Play them.

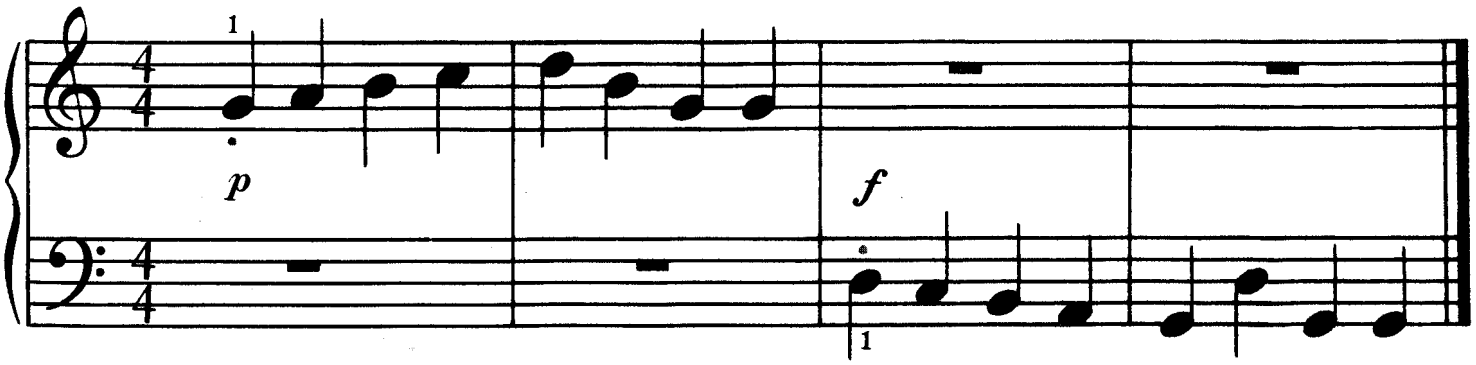


Staccato Notes

Staccato notes have a **dot** over or under them. Play staccato notes short and separated.

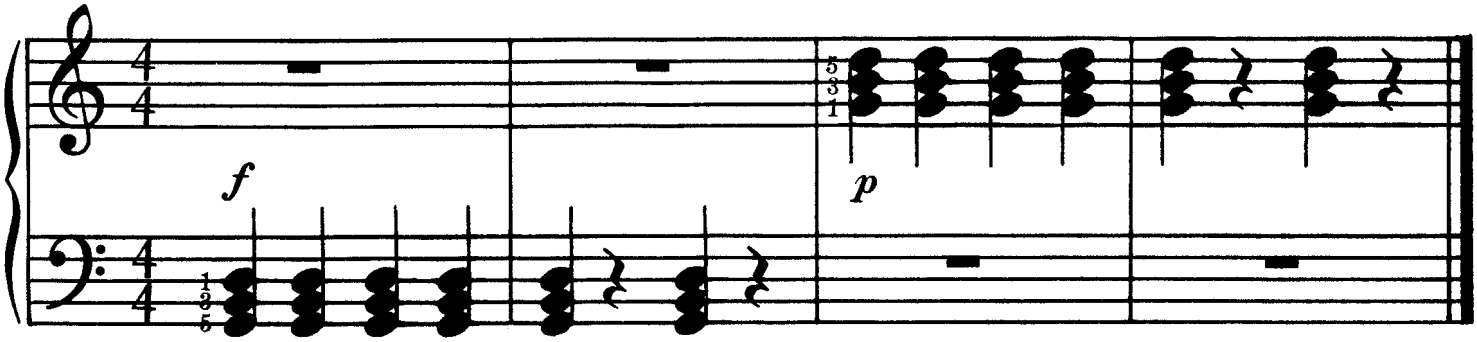


110. Draw dots over or under these notes. A dot goes **over** the note if the stem is down. A dot goes **under** the note if the stem is up. Play these staccato notes.

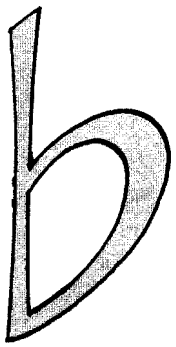


111. Draw dots over or under these harmonic intervals. Play these staccato notes.

112. Draw dots over or under these G chords. Play these staccato chords.



Flat Sign



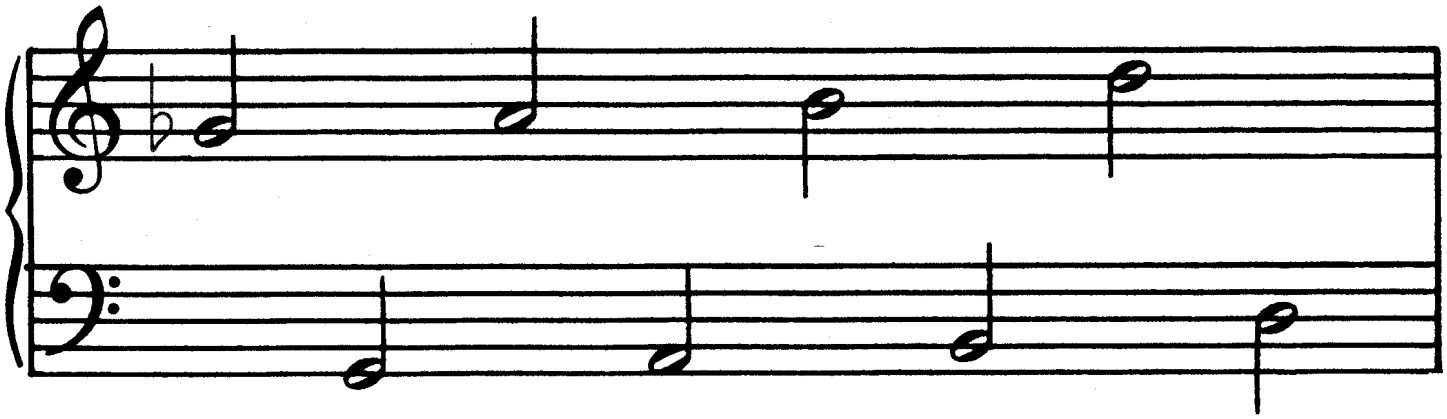
The **flat sign** before a note means
to play the next key to the **left**.

113. Trace the first two flat signs, then draw four more.
First draw a straight line down.
Next, draw a heavy curved line.

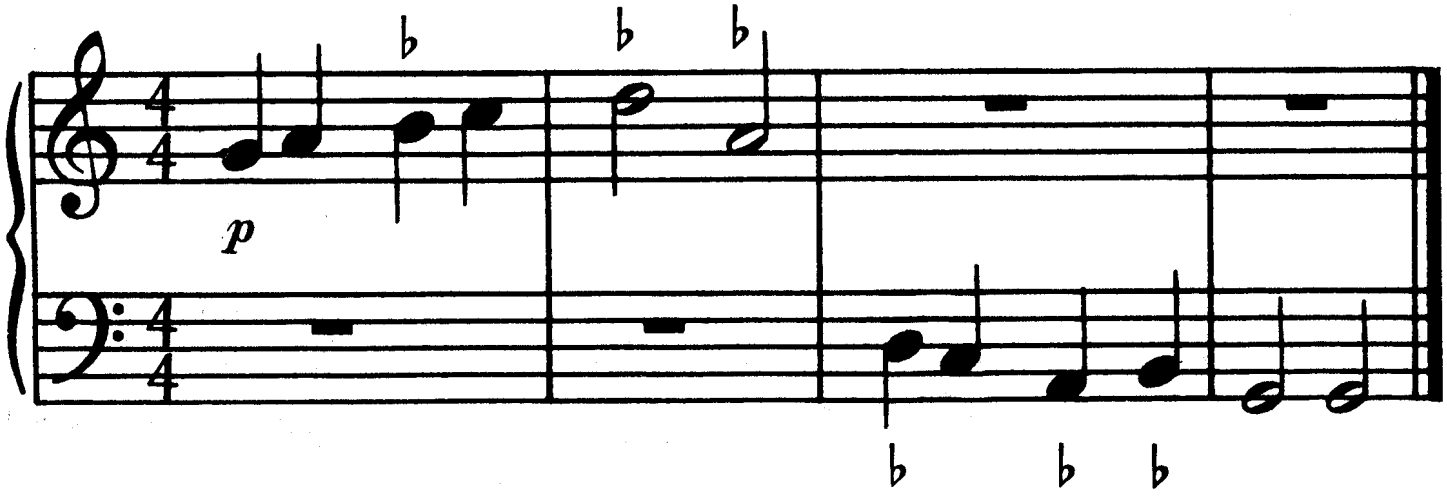
The "round" part of the flat is placed

on a **line** or in a **space**.

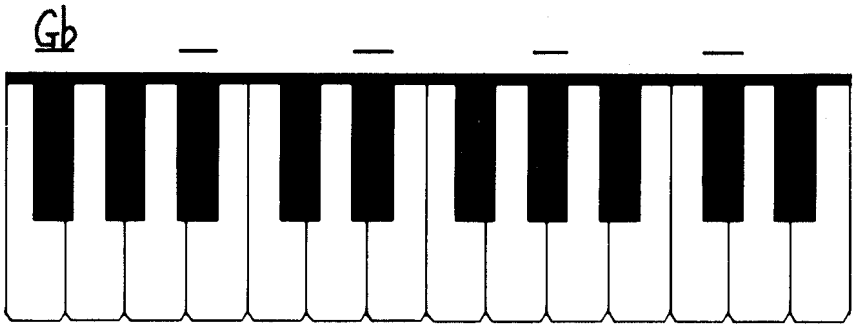
114. Draw a flat before each note. Play and name these notes.



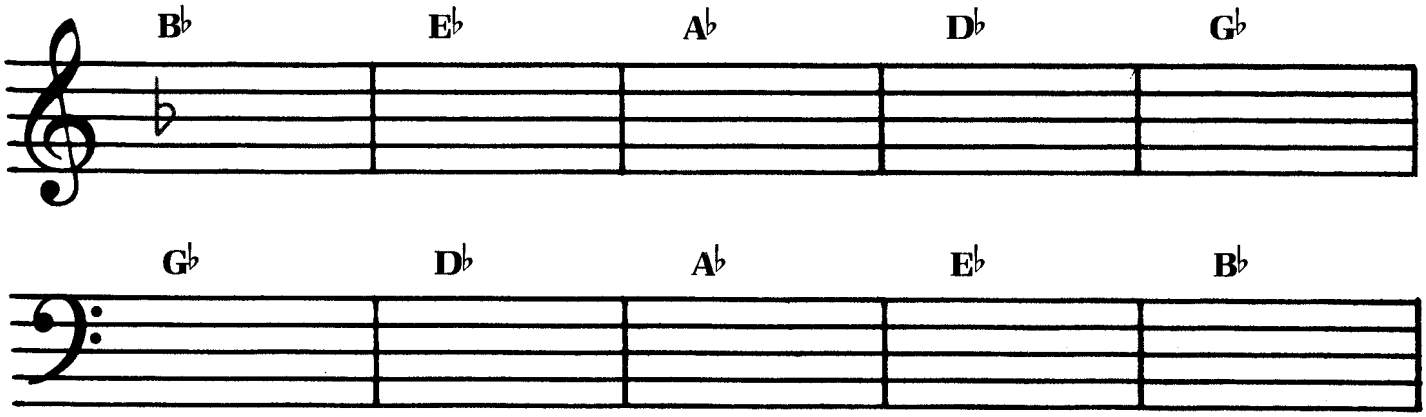
115. Draw a flat before each note with a ♭ sign over or under it.
Play and name these notes.



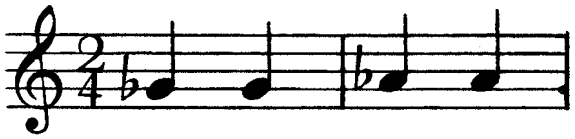
116. Write the names of these flat keys. Play them.



117. Draw these flats on the staff. Play and name them.

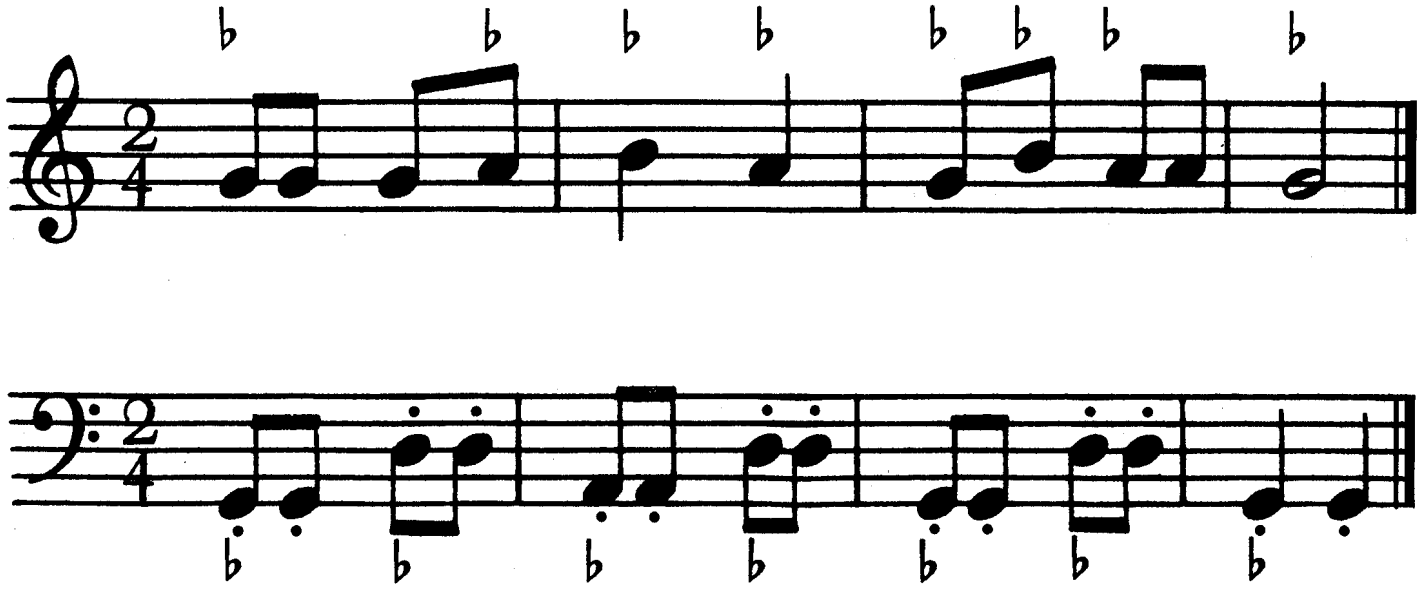


The flat sign lasts for the **whole** measure.



(also G♭) (also A♭)

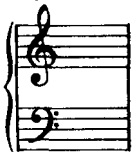
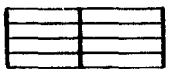
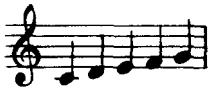
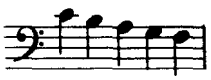
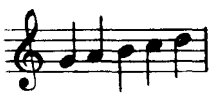
118. Draw a flat before each note with a ♭ sign over or under it. Play and name these notes.



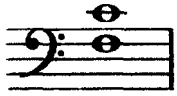
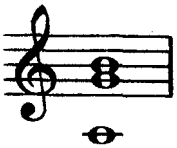
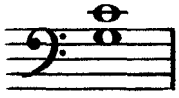
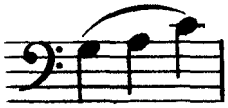
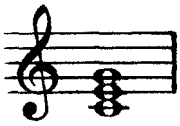
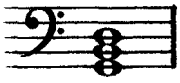
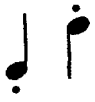
Matching Games

Write the number in front of the correct term.

Game 1

1. _____ half note
2. _____ quarter note
3. _____ two eighth notes
4. _____ whole note
5. _____ treble clef sign
6. _____ 4 beats to each measure
7. _____ bass clef sign
8. _____ 3 beats to each measure
9. _____ grand staff
10.  _____ 2 beats to each measure
11.  _____ repeat sign
12. _____ double bar
13. _____ bar lines
14.  _____ G position (R.H.)
15.  _____ C position (R.H.)
16.  _____ middle C position (L.H.)

Game 2

1. 3rd _____
2. 2nd _____ 
3. 5th _____ 
4. 4th _____ 
5. _____ quarter rest
6.  _____ tie
7. _____ half rest
8. _____ slur
9. _____ whole rest
10.  _____ G chord
11.  _____ sharp sign
12. _____ C chord
13. _____ flat sign
14.  _____ loud
15. *p* _____ soft
16. *f* _____ staccato notes